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ABEUNT STUDIA IN MORES

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Illustrated Sterling Edition

PELHAM

EUGENE ARAM

BY

EDWARD BULWER LYTTON

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PELHAM;

OR,

ADVENTURES OF A GENTLEMAN.

CHAPTER I.

Où peut-on être mieux qu'au sein de sa famille ? [1] — *French Song.*

I AM an only child. My father was the younger son of one of our eldest earls, my mother the dowerless daughter of a Scotch peer. Mr. Pelham was a moderate Whig, and gave sumptuous dinners; Lady Frances was a woman of taste, and particularly fond of diamonds and old china.

Vulgar people know nothing of the necessaries required in good society, and the credit they give is as short as their pedigree. Six years after my birth there was an execution in our house. My mother was just setting off on a visit to the Duchess of D——; she declared it was impossible to go without her diamonds. The chief of the bailiffs declared it was impossible to trust them out of his sight. The matter was compromised: the bailiff went with my mother to C——, and was introduced as *my tutor.* "A man of singular merit," whispered my mother, "but *so* shy!" Fortunately the bailiff was abashed, and by losing his impudence he kept the secret. At the end of the week the diamonds went to the jeweller's, and Lady Frances wore paste.

I think it was about a month afterwards that a sixteenth cousin left my mother twenty thousand pounds. "It will just pay off our most importunate creditors and equip me for Melton," said Mr. Pelham.

[1] "Where can one be better than in the bosom of one's family?"

"It will just redeem my diamonds and refurnish the house," said Lady Frances.

The latter alternative was chosen. My father went down to run his last horse at Newmarket, and my mother received nine hundred people in a Turkish tent. Both were equally fortunate, the *Greek* and the *Turk:* my father's horse *lost*, in consequence of which he pocketed five thousand pounds; and my mother looked so charming as a sultana that Seymour Conway fell desperately in love with her.

Mr. Conway had just caused two divorces; and of course all the women in London were dying for him, — judge then of the pride which Lady Frances felt at his addresses. The end of the season was unusually dull, and my mother, after having looked over her list of engagements and ascertained that she had none remaining worth staying for, agreed to elope with her new lover.

The carriage was at the end of the square. My mother, for the first time in her life, got up at six o'clock. Her foot was on the step, and her hand next to Mr. Conway's heart, when she remembered that her favorite china monster and her French dog were left behind. She insisted on returning; re-entered the house, and was coming downstairs with one under each arm, when she was met by my father and two servants. My father's valet had discovered the flight (I forget how), and awakened his master.

When my father was convinced of his loss he called for his dressing-gown, searched the garret and the kitchen, looked in the maid's drawers and the cellaret, and finally declared he was distracted. I have heard that the servants were quite melted by his grief; and I do not doubt it in the least, for he was always celebrated for his skill in private theatricals. He was just retiring to vent his grief in his dressing-room when he met my mother. It must altogether have been an awkward encounter, and, indeed, for my father a remarkably unfortunate occurrence, since Seymour Conway was immensely rich, and the damages would, no doubt, have been proportionably high. Had they met each other alone, the affair might easily have been settled, and Lady Frances gone off in tranquillity: those confounded servants are always in the way!

I have observed that the distinguishing trait of people accustomed to good society is a calm, imperturbable quiet, which pervades all their actions and habits, from the greatest to the least, — they eat in quiet, move in quiet, live in quiet, and lose their wife, or even their money, in quiet; while low persons cannot take up either a spoon or an affront without making such an amazing noise about it. To render this observation good, and to return to the intended elopement, nothing further was said upon that event. My father introduced Conway to Brookes's and invited him to dinner twice a week for a whole twelvemonth.

Not long after this occurrence, by the death of my grandfather my uncle succeeded to the title and estates of the family. He was, as people justly observed, rather an odd man, — built schools for peasants, forgave poachers, and diminished his farmers' rents; indeed, on account of these and similar eccentricities he was thought a fool by some, and a madman by others. However, he was not quite destitute of natural feeling; for he paid my father's debts and established us in the secure enjoyment of our former splendour. But this piece of generosity, or justice, was done in the most unhandsome manner: he obtained a promise from my father to retire from whist and relinquish the turf; and he prevailed upon my mother to conceive an aversion to diamonds and an indifference to china monsters.

CHAPTER II.

Tell arts they have no soundness,
  But vary by esteeming;
Tell schools they want profoundness,
  And stand too much on seeming.
If arts and schools reply,
Give arts and schools the lie. — *The Soul's Errand.*

At ten years old I went to Eton. I had been educated till that period by my mother, who, being distantly related to Lord —— (who had published "Hints upon the Culinary Art"),

imagined she possessed an hereditary claim to literary distinction. History was her great forte, for she had read all the historical romances of the day; and history accordingly I had been carefully taught.

I think at this moment I see my mother before me, reclining on her sofa and repeating to me some story about Queen Elizabeth and Lord Essex; then telling me, in a languid voice, as she sank back with the exertion, of the blessings of a literary taste, and admonishing me never to read above half an hour at a time, for fear of losing my health.

Well, to Eton I went; and the second day I had been there I was half killed for refusing, with all the pride of a Pelham, to wash teacups. I was rescued from the clutches of my tyrant by a boy not much bigger than myself, but reckoned the best fighter, for his size, in the whole school. His name was Reginald Glanville; from that period we became inseparable, and our friendship lasted all the time he stayed at Eton, which was within a year of my own departure for Cambridge.

His father was a baronet of a very ancient and wealthy family, and his mother was a woman of some talent and more ambition. She made her house one of the most attractive in London. Seldom seen at large assemblies, she was eagerly sought after in the well-winnowed *soirées* of the elect. Her wealth, great as it was, seemed the least prominent ingredient of her establishment. There was in it no uncalled-for ostentation, no purse-proud vulgarity, no cringing to great, and no patronizing condescension to little people; even the Sunday newspapers could not find fault with her, and the querulous wives of younger brothers could only sneer and be silent.

"It is an excellent connection," said my mother when I told her of my friendship with Reginald Glanville, "and will be of more use to you than many of greater apparent consequence. Remember, my dear, that in all the friends you make at present, you look to the advantage you can derive from them hereafter. That is what we call knowledge of the world; and it is to get the knowledge of the world that you are sent to a public school."

I think, however, to my shame, that notwithstanding my mother's instructions, very few prudential considerations were mingled with my friendship for Reginald Glanville. I loved him with a warmth of attachment which has since surprised even myself.

He was of a very singular character: he used to wander by the river in the bright days of summer, when all else were at play, without any companion but his own thoughts; and these were tinged, even at that early age, with a deep and impassioned melancholy. He was so reserved in his manner that it was looked upon as coldness or pride, and was repaid as such by a pretty general dislike. Yet to those he loved, no one could be more open and warm, more watchful to gratify others, more indifferent to gratification for himself; an utter absence of all selfishness, and an eager and active benevolence, were indeed the distinguishing traits of his character. I have seen him endure with a careless good-nature the most provoking affronts from boys much less than himself; but if I, or any other of his immediate friends, was injured or aggrieved, his anger was almost implacable. Although he was of a slight frame, yet early exercise had brought strength to his muscles and activity to his limbs; while there was that in his courage and will which, despite his reserve and unpopularity, always marked him out as a leader in those enterprises wherein we test as boys the qualities which chiefly contribute to secure hereafter our position amongst men.

Such, briefly and imperfectly sketched, was the character of Reginald Glanville, — the one who, of all my early companions, differed the most from myself, yet the one whom I loved the most, and the one whose future destiny was the most intertwined with my own.

I was in the head-class when I left Eton. As I was reckoned an uncommonly well educated boy, it may not be ungratifying to the admirers of the present system of education to pause here for a moment and recall what I then knew. I could make fifty Latin verses in half an hour; I could construe, *without* an English translation, all the easy Latin authors, and many of the difficult ones *with it;* I could *read* Greek fluently,

and even translate it through the medium of the Latin version technically called a crib.[1] I was thought exceedingly clever, for I had been only eight years acquiring all this fund of information, which, as one need never recall it in the world, you have every right to suppose that I had entirely forgotten before I was five and twenty As I was never *taught* a syllable of English during this period; as when I once attempted to read Pope's poems out of school hours I was laughed at and called "*a sap;*" as my mother, when I went to school, renounced her own instructions; and as, whatever schoolmasters may think to the contrary, one learns nothing nowadays by inspiration,—so of everything which relates to English literature, English laws, and English history (with the exception of the said story of Queen Elizabeth and Lord Essex), you have the same right to suppose that I was, at the age of eighteen, when I left Eton, in the profoundest ignorance.

At this age I was transplanted to Cambridge, where I bloomed for two years in the blue and silver of a fellow-commoner of Trinity. At the end of that time (being of royal descent) I became entitled to an *honorary* degree. I suppose the term is in contra-distinction to an *honourable* degree, which is obtained by pale men in spectacles and cotton stockings after thirty-six months of intense application.

I do not exactly remember how I spent my time at Cambridge. I had a pianoforte in my room, and a private billiard-room at a village two miles off; and between these resources I managed to improve my mind more than could reasonably have been expected. To say truth, the whole place reeked with vulgarity. The men drank beer by the gallon, and ate cheese by the hundredweight; wore jockey-cut coats, and talked slang; rode for wagers, and swore when they lost; smoked in your face, and expectorated on the floor. Their proudest

[1] It is but just to say that the educational system at public schools is greatly improved since the above was written. And take those great seminaries altogether, it may be doubted whether any institutions more philosophical in theory are better adapted to secure that union of classical tastes with manly habits and honourable sentiments which distinguishes the English gentleman.

glory was to drive the mail; their mightiest exploit to box with the coachman; their most delicate amour to leer at the barmaid.[1]

It will be believed that I felt little regret in quitting companions of this description. I went to take leave of our college tutor. "Mr. Pelham," said he, affectionately squeezing me by the hand, "your conduct has been most exemplary: you have not walked wantonly over the college grass-plats, nor set your dog at the proctor; nor driven tandems by day, nor broken lamps by night; nor entered the chapel in order to display your intoxication, nor the lecture-room in order to caricature the professors. This is the general behaviour of young men of family and fortune; but it has not been yours. Sir, you have been an honour to your college."

Thus closed my academical career. He who does not allow that it passed creditably to my teachers, profitably to myself, and beneficially to the world, is a narrow-minded and illiterate man, who knows nothing of the advantages of modern education.

CHAPTER III.

THUS does a false ambition rule us,
Thus pomp delude, and folly fool us. — SHENSTONE.

An open house, haunted with great resort. — BISHOP HALL: *Satires.*

I LEFT Cambridge in a very weak state of health; and as nobody had yet come to London, I accepted the invitation of Sir Lionel Garrett to pay him a visit at his country-seat. Accordingly, one raw winter's day, full of the hopes of the reviving influence of air and exercise, I found myself carefully packed up in three greatcoats, and on the high road to Garrett Park.

[1] This, at that time, was a character that could only be applied to the gayest, that is, the worst, set at the University; and perhaps now the character may scarcely exist.

Sir Lionel Garrett was a character very common in England, and in describing him, I describe the whole species. He was of an ancient family, and his ancestors had for centuries resided on their estates in Norfolk. Sir Lionel, who came to his majority and his fortune at the same time, went up to London at the age of twenty-one, a raw, uncouth sort of young man, with a green coat and lank hair. His friends in town were of that set whose members are *above ton* whenever they do not grasp at its possession, but who, whenever they do, lose at once their aim and their equilibrium, and fall immeasurably below it. I mean that set which I call "the respectable," consisting of old peers of an old school; country gentlemen, who still disdain not to love their wine and to hate the French; generals who *have served* in the army; elder brothers who succeed to something besides a mortgage; and younger brothers who do not mistake their capital for their income. To this set you may add the whole of the baronetage, — for I have remarked that baronets hang together like bees or Scotchmen; and if I go to a baronet's house and speak to some one whom I have not the happiness to know, I always say "Sir John"!

It was no wonder, then, that to this set belonged Sir Lionel Garrett, — no more the youth with a green coat and lank hair, but pinched in and curled out, abounding in horses and whiskers, dancing all night, lounging all day, the favorite of the old ladies, the Philander of the young.

One unfortunate evening Sir Lionel Garrett was introduced to the celebrated Duchess of D——. From that moment his head was turned. Before then he had always imagined that he was somebody, — that he was Sir Lionel Garrett, with a good-looking person and eight thousand a year; he now knew that he was nobody, unless he went to Lady G——'s, and unless he bowed to Lady S——. Disdaining all importance derived from himself, it became absolutely necessary to his happiness that all his importance should be derived solely from his acquaintance with others. He cared not a straw that he was a man of fortune, of family, of consequence; he must be a man of *ton*, or he was an atom, a nonentity, a very worm, and no man. No lawyer at Gray's Inn, no galley slave at

the oar, ever worked so hard at his task as Sir Lionel Garrett at *his*. *Ton* to a single man is a thing attainable enough. Sir Lionel was just gaining the envied distinction when he saw, courted, and married Lady Harriet Woodstock.

His new wife was of a modern and not very rich family, and striving, like Sir Lionel, for the notoriety of fashion; but of this struggle he was ignorant. He saw her *admitted* into good society, — he imagined she *commanded* it; she was a hanger-on, — he believed she was a leader. Lady Harriet was crafty and twenty-four, had no objection to be married, nor to change the name of Woodstock for Garrett. She kept up the baronet's mistake till it was too late to repair it.

Marriage did not bring Sir Lionel wisdom. His wife was of the same turn of mind as himself: they might have been great people in the country, — they preferred being little people in town. They might *have* chosen *friends* among persons of respectability and rank, — they preferred *being* chosen *as acquaintances* by persons of *ton*. Society was their being's end and aim; and the only thing which brought them pleasure was the pain of attaining it. Did I not say truly that I would describe individuals of a common species? Is there one who reads this who does not recognize that overflowing class of our population, whose members would conceive it an insult to be thought of sufficient rank to be respectable for what they are; who take it as an honour that they are made by their acquaintance; who renounce the ease of living for themselves, for the trouble of living for persons who care not a pin for their existence; who are wretched if they are not dictated to by others; and who toil, groan, travail, through the whole course of life, in order to forfeit their independence?

I arrived at Garrett Park just time enough to dress for dinner. As I was descending the stairs after having performed that ceremony, I heard my own name pronounced by a very soft, lisping voice, — "Henry Pelham, — dear, what a pretty name! Is he handsome?"

"Rather elegant than handsome," was the unsatisfactory reply, couched in a slow, pompous accent, which I immediately recognized to belong to Lady Harriet Garrett.

"Can we make something of him?" resumed the first voice.

"Something!" said Lady Harriet, indignantly; "he will be Lord Glenmorris! and he is son to Lady Frances Pelham."

"Ah," said the lisper, carelessly; "but can he write poetry and play *proverbes?*"

"No, Lady Harriet," said I, advancing; "but permit me, through you, to assure Lady Nelthorpe that he can admire those who do."

"So you know me, then," said the lisper: "I see we shall be excellent friends:" and disengaging herself from Lady Harriet, she took my arm and began discussing persons and things, poetry and china, French plays and music, till I found myself beside her at dinner, and most assiduously endeavouring to silence her by the superior engrossments of a *bèchamel de poisson.*

I took the opportunity of the pause to survey the little circle of which Lady Harriet was the centre. In the first place there was Mr. Davison, a great political economist, a short, dark, corpulent gentleman, with a quiet, serene, sleepy countenance; beside him was a quick, sharp little woman, all sparkle and bustle, glancing a small gray, prying eye round the table with a most restless activity, — this, as Lady Nelthorpe afterwards informed me, was a Miss Trafford, an excellent person for a Christmas in the country, whom everybody was dying to have; she was an admirable mimic, an admirable actress, and an admirable reciter; made poetry and shoes, and told fortunes by the cards, which *actually came true!*

There was also Mr. Wormwood, — the *noli-me-tangere* of literary lions; an author who sowed his conversation, not with flowers, but thorns. Nobody could accuse him of the flattery generally imputed to his species; through the course of a long and varied life he had never been once known to say a civil thing. He was too much disliked not to be sought after; whatever is once notorious, even for being disagreeable, is sure to be courted. Opposite to him sat the really clever and affectedly pedantic Lord Vincent, one of those persons who have been "promising young men" all their lives; who are found

till four o'clock in the afternoon in a dressing-gown, with a quarto before them; who go down into the country for six weeks every session, to cram an impromptu reply; and who always have a work in the press which is never to be published.

Lady Nelthorpe herself I had frequently seen. She had some reputation for talent, was exceedingly affected, wrote poetry in albums, ridiculed her husband (who was a fox-hunter), and had a particular taste for the fine arts.

There were four or five others of the unknown vulgar, — younger brothers who were good shots and bad matches; elderly ladies who lived in Baker Street and liked long whist; and young ones who never took wine, and said "Sir"!

I must, however, among this number except the beautiful Lady Roseville, — the most fascinating woman, perhaps, of the day. She was evidently *the* great person there, — and, indeed, among all people who paid due deference to *ton*, was always sure to be so everywhere. I have never seen but one person more beautiful. Her eyes were of the deepest blue; her complexion of the most delicate carnation; her hair of the richest auburn; nor could even Mr. Wormwood detect the smallest fault in the rounded yet slender symmetry of her figure.

Although not above twenty-five, she was in that state in which alone a woman ceases to be a dependant, — widowhood. Lord Roseville, who had been dead about two years, had not survived their marriage many months; that period was, however, sufficiently long to allow him to appreciate her excellence and to testify his sense of it: the whole of his unentailed property, which was very large, he bequeathed to her.

She was very fond of the society of literary persons, though without the pretence of belonging to their order. But her manners constituted her chief attraction; while they were utterly different from those of everyone else, you could not, in the least minutiæ, discover in what the difference consisted: this is, in my opinion, the real test of perfect breeding. While you are enchanted with the effect, it should possess so little

prominency and peculiarity that you should never be able to guess the cause.

"Pray," said Lord Vincent to Mr. Wormwood, "have you been to P—— this year?"

"No," was the answer.

"I have," said Miss Trafford, who never lost an opportunity of slipping in a word.

"Well, and did they make you sleep, as usual, at the Crown, with the same eternal excuse, after having brought you fifty miles from town, of small house, no beds, all engaged, inn close by? Ah! never shall I forget that inn, with its royal name and its hard beds, —

"'Uneasy sleeps a head beneath the Crown!'"

"Ha, ha! excellent!" cried Miss Trafford, who was always the first in at the death of a pun. "Yes, indeed they did; poor old Lord Belton with his rheumatism, and that immense General Grant with his asthma, together with three 'single men' and myself, were safely conveyed to that asylum for the destitute."

"Ah! Grant, Grant!" said Lord Vincent, eagerly, who saw another opportunity of whipping in a pun. "He slept there also the same night I did; and when I saw his unwieldy person waddling out of the door the next morning, I said to Temple, 'Well, *that's the largest Grant I ever saw from the Crown.*'"[1]

"Very good," said Wormwood, gravely. "I declare, Vincent, you are growing *quite* witty. You know Jekyl, of course? Poor fellow, what a really good punster *he was*, — not agreeable though, particularly at dinner; no punsters are. Mr. Davison, what is that dish next to you?"

Mr. Davison was a great gourmand: "*Salmis de perdreaux aux truffes*," replied the political economist.

"Truffles!" said Wormwood, "have *you* been eating any?"

"Yes," said Davison, with unusual energy; "and they are the best I have tasted for a long time."

"Very likely," said Wormwood, with a dejected air. "I am particularly fond of them, but I dare not touch one, — truffles

[1] It was from Mr. J. Smith that Lord Vincent purloined this pun.

are so *very* apoplectic; you, I make no doubt, may eat them in safety."

Wormwood was a tall, meagre man, with a neck a yard long. Davison was, as I have said, short and fat, and made without any apparent neck at all, — only head and shoulders like a codfish.

Poor Mr. Davison turned perfectly white; he fidgeted about in his chair, cast a look of the most deadly fear and aversion at the fatal dish he had been so attentive to before, and muttering "apoplectic!" closed his lips, and did not open them again all dinner-time.

Mr. Wormwood's object was effected. Two people were silenced and uncomfortable, and a sort of mist hung over the spirits of the whole party. The dinner went on and off like all other dinners; the ladies retired, and the men drank and talked politics. Mr. Davison left the room first, in order to look out the word "truffle" in the Encyclopædia; and Lord Vincent and I went next, "lest," as my companion characteristically observed, "that d——d Wormwood should, if we stayed a moment longer, 'send us weeping to our beds.'"

CHAPTER IV.

O LA belle chose que la Poste![1] — *Letters of Sévigné.*

Ay, but who is it? — *As You Like It.*

I HAD mentioned to my mother my intended visit to Garrett Park, and the second day after my arrival there came the following letter: —

MY DEAR HENRY, — I was very glad to hear you were rather better than you had been. I trust you will take great care of yourself. I think flannel waistcoats might be advisable, — and, by the by, they are very good for the complexion. *A propos* of the complexion: I did not like that blue coat you wore when I last saw you; you look best

[1] "Oh, what a beautiful thing is — the Post-office!"

in black, — which is a great compliment; for people must be very distinguished in appearance in order to do so.

You know, my dear, that those Garretts are in themselves anything but unexceptionable; you will therefore take care not to be *too* intimate, — it is, however, a very good house; most whom you meet there are worth knowing, for one thing or the other. Remember, Henry, that the acquaintance (*not* the friends) of second or third rate people are always sure to be good; they are not independent enough to receive whom they like, — their whole rank is in their guests. You may be also sure that the *ménage* will, in outward appearance, at least, be quite *comme il faut*, and for the same reason. Gain as much knowledge *de l'art culinaire* as you can; it is an accomplishment absolutely necessary. You may also pick up a little acquaintance with metaphysics, if you have any opportunity, — that sort of thing is a good deal talked about just at present.

I hear Lady Roseville is at Garrett Park. You must be particularly attentive to her; you will probably now have an opportunity *de faire votre cour* that may never again happen. In London she is so much surrounded by all that she is quite inaccessible to one; besides, there you will have so many rivals. Without flattery to you, I take it for granted that you are the best-looking and most agreeable person at Garrett Park; and it will therefore be a most unpardonable fault if you do not make Lady Roseville of the same opinion. Nothing, my dear son, is like a *liaison* (quite innocent, of course) with a woman of celebrity in the world. In marriage a man lowers a woman to his own rank; in an *affaire de cœur* he raises himself to hers. I need not, I am sure, after what I have said, press this point any further.

Write to me and inform me of all your proceedings. If you mention the people who are at Garrett Park, I can tell you the proper line of conduct to pursue with each.

I am sure that I need not add that I have nothing out your real good at heart, and that I am your very affectionate mother,

FRANCES PELHAM.

P. S. — Never talk much to young men: remember that it is the women who make a reputation in society.

"Well," said I, when I had read this letter, "my mother is very right, and so now for Lady Roseville."

I went downstairs to breakfast. Miss Trafford and Lady Nelthorpe were in the room, talking with great interest, and on Miss Trafford's part with still greater vehemence.

"So handsome," said Lady Nelthorpe, as I approached.

"Are you talking of me?" said I.

"Oh, you vanity of vanities!" was the answer. "No, we were speaking of a very romantic adventure which has happened to Miss Trafford and myself, and disputing about the hero of it. Miss Trafford declares he is frightful; *I* say that he is beautiful. Now, you know, Mr. Pelham, as to *you* —"

"There can be but one opinion. But the adventure?"

"Is this!" cried Miss Trafford, in great fright lest Lady Nelthorpe should, by speaking first, have the pleasure of the narration. "We were walking, two or three days ago, by the sea-side, picking up shells and talking about the 'Corsair,' when a large, fierce —"

"Man?" interrupted I.

"No, *dog*," renewed Miss Trafford, "flew suddenly out of a cave, under a rock, and began growling at dear Lady Nelthorpe and me in the most savage manner imaginable. He would certainly have torn us to pieces if a very tall —"

"Not so very tall, either," said Lady Nelthorpe.

"Dear, how you interrupt one!" said Miss Trafford, pettishly; "well, a very short man, then, wrapped up in a cloak —"

"In a greatcoat," drawled Lady Nelthorpe.

Miss Trafford went on, without noticing the emendation, — "had not, with incredible rapidity, sprung down the rock and —"

"Called him off," said Lady Nelthorpe.

"Yes, called him off," pursued Miss Trafford, looking round for the necessary symptoms of our wonder at this very extraordinary incident.

"What is the most remarkable," said Lady Nelthorpe, "is that though he seemed, from his dress and appearance, to be really a gentleman, he never stayed to ask if we were alarmed or hurt, scarcely even looked at us —"

("I don't wonder at *that!*" said Mr. Wormwood, who, with Lord Vincent, had just entered the room).

"— and vanished among the rocks as suddenly as he appeared."

"Oh, you've seen that fellow, have you?" said Lord Vincent; "so have I, and a devilish queer-looking person he is, —

"'The balls of his broad eyes rolled in his head,
And glared betwixt a yellow and a red;
He looked a lion with a gloomy stare,
And o'er his eyebrows hung his matted hair.'

Well remembered, and better applied, eh, Mr. Pelham?"

"Really," said I, "I am not able to judge of the application, since I have not seen the hero."

"Oh, it is admirable!" said Miss Trafford; "just the description I should have given of him in prose. But pray where, when, and how did you see him?"

"Your question is religiously mysterious, — *tria juncta in uno*," replied Vincent; "but I will answer it with the simplicity of a Quaker. The other evening I was coming home from one of Sir Lionel's preserves, and had sent the keeper on before, in order more undisturbedly to —"

"Con witticisms for dinner," said Wormwood.

"To make out the meaning of Mr. Wormwood's last work," continued Lord Vincent. "My shortest way lay through that church-yard, about a mile hence, which is such a lion in this ugly part of the country because it has three thistles and a tree. Just as I got there I saw a man suddenly rise from the earth, where he appeared to have been lying; he stood still for a moment, and then (evidently not perceiving me) raised his clasped hands to heaven and muttered some words which I was not able distinctly to hear. As I approached nearer to him, which I did with no very pleasant sensations, a large black dog, which till then had remained *couchant*, sprang towards me with a loud growl, —

"'Sonat hic de nare canina
Litera,' —

as Persius has it. I was too terrified to move, —

"'Obstupui, steteruntque comæ,' —

and I should most infallibly have been converted into dog's meat if our mutual acquaintance had not started from his

revery, called his dog by the very appropriate name of Terror, and then, slouching his hat over his face, passed rapidly by me, dog and all. I did not recover the fright for an hour and a quarter. I walked, — ye gods, how I *did* walk! — No wonder, by the by, that I *mended* my pace, for, as Pliny says truly: 'Timor est *emendator* asperrimus.'"[1]

Mr. Wormwood had been very impatient during this recital, preparing an attack upon Lord Vincent, when Mr. Davison, entering suddenly, diverted the assault.

"Good heavens!" said Wormwood, dropping his roll, "how very ill you look to-day, Mr. Davison, — face flushed, veins swelled — Oh, those horrid truffles! Miss Trafford, I'll trouble you for the salt."

CHAPTER V.

Be she fairer than the day,
Or the flowery meads in May,
If she be not so to me,
What care I how fair she be?

George Withers.

It was great pity, so it was,
That villanous saltpetre should be digged
Out of the bowels of the harmless earth,
Which many a good tall fellow had destroyed.

First Part of King Henry IV.

Several days passed. I had taken particular pains to ingratiate myself with Lady Roseville, and so far as common acquaintance went, I had no reason to be dissatisfied with my success. Anything else, I soon discovered, notwithstanding

[1] Most of the quotations from Latin or French authors interspersed throughout this work will be translated for the convenience of the general reader; but exceptions will be made where such quotations (as is sometimes the case when from the mouth of Lord Vincent) merely contain a play upon words which are pointless out of the language employed, or which only iterate or illustrate, by a characteristic pedantry, the sentence that precedes or follows them.

my vanity (which made no inconsiderable part in the composition of Henry Pelham), was quite out of the question. Her mind was wholly of a different mould from my own. She was like a being, not perhaps of a better, but of another world than myself; we had not one thought or opinion in common; we looked upon things with a totally different vision. I was soon convinced that she was of a nature exactly contrary to what was generally believed, — she was anything but the mere mechanical woman of the world. She possessed great sensibility, and even romance of temper, strong passions, and still stronger imagination; but over all these deeper recesses of her character the extreme softness and languor of her manners threw a veil which no superficial observer could penetrate. There were times when I could believe that she was inwardly restless and unhappy; but she was too well versed in the arts of concealment to suffer such an appearance to be more than momentary.

I must own that I consoled myself very easily for my want, in this particular instance, of that usual good fortune which attends me with the divine sex; the fact was that I had another object in pursuit. All the men at Sir Lionel Garrett's were keen sportsmen. Now, shooting is an amusement I was never particularly partial to. I was first disgusted with that species of rational recreation at a *battue*, where, instead of bagging anything, *I was nearly bagged*, having been inserted, like wine in an ice-pail, in a wet ditch for three hours, during which time my hat had been twice shot at for a pheasant, and my leather gaiters once for a hare; and to crown all, when these several mistakes were discovered, my intended exterminators, instead of apologizing for having shot at me, were quite disappointed at having missed.

Seriously, that same shooting is a most barbarous amusement, only fit for majors in the army, and royal dukes, and that sort of people. *The mere walking* is bad enough; but embarrassing one's arms, moreover, with a gun, and one's legs with turnip-tops, exposing oneself to the mercy of bad shots and the atrocity of good, seems to me only a state of painful fatigue, enlivened by the probability of being killed.

This digression is meant to signify that I never joined the single men and double-mantons that went in and off among Sir Lionel Garrett's preserves. I used, instead, to take long walks by myself, and found, like virtue, my own reward in the additional health and strength these diurnal exertions produced me.

One morning chance threw into my way a *bonne fortune* which I took care to improve. From that time the family of a Farmer Sinclair (one of Sir Lionel's tenants) was alarmed by strange and supernatural noises: one apartment in especial, occupied by a female member of the household, was allowed, even by the clerk of the parish, a very bold man and a bit of a sceptic, to be haunted; the windows of that chamber were wont to open and shut, thin, airy voices confabulate therein, and dark shapes hover *thereout*, long after the fair occupant had, with the rest of the family, retired to repose. But the most unaccountable thing was the fatality which attended *me*, and seemed to mark me out for an untimely death. *I*, who had so carefully kept out of the way of gunpowder as a sportsman, very narrowly escaped being twice shot as a ghost. This was but a poor reward for a walk more than a mile long, in nights by no means of cloudless climes and starry skies; accordingly, I resolved to "give up the ghost" in earnest rather than in metaphor, and to pay my last visit and adieus to the mansion of Farmer Sinclair. The night on which I executed this resolve was rather memorable in my future history.

The rain had fallen so heavily during the day as to render the road to the house almost impassable; and when it was time to leave, I inquired, with very considerable emotion, whether there was not an easier way to return. The answer was satisfactory, and my last nocturnal visit at Farmer Sinclair's concluded.

CHAPTER VI.

Why sleeps he not, when others are at rest? — Byron.

According to the explanation I had received, the road I was now to pursue was somewhat longer, but much better, than that which I generally took. It was to lead me home through the church-yard of ——, the same, by the by, which Lord Vincent had particularized in his anecdote of the mysterious stranger. The night was clear, but windy; there were a few light clouds passing rapidly over the moon, which was at her full, and shone through the frosty air with all that cold and transparent brightness so peculiar to our Northern winters. I walked briskly on till I came to the church-yard; I could not then help pausing (notwithstanding my total deficiency in all romance) to look for a few moments at the exceeding beauty of the scene around me. The church itself was extremely old, and stood alone and gray, in the rude simplicity of the earliest form of Gothic architecture; two large dark yew-trees drooped on each side over tombs which, from their size and decorations, appeared to be the last possession of some quondam lords of the soil. To the left, the ground was skirted by a thick and luxuriant copse of evergreens, in the front of which stood one tall, naked oak, stern and leafless, a very token of desolation and decay; there were but few gravestones scattered about, and these were, for the most part, hidden by the long wild grass which wreathed and climbed around them. Over all, the blue skies and still moon shed that solemn light, the effect of which, either on the scene or the feelings, it is so impossible to describe.

I was just about to renew my walk when a tall, dark figure, wrapped up, like myself, in a large French cloak, passed slowly along from the other side of the church and paused by the copse I have before mentioned. I was shrouded at that moment from his sight by one of the yew-trees. He stood

still only for a few moments; he then flung himself upon the earth, and sobbed, audibly, even at the spot where I was standing. I was in doubt whether to wait longer or to proceed; my way lay just by him, and it might be dangerous to interrupt so substantial an apparition. However, my curiosity was excited and my feet were half frozen,—two cogent reasons for proceeding; and to say truth, I was never very much frightened by anything, dead or alive.

Accordingly, I left my obscurity and walked slowly onwards. I had not got above three paces before the figure arose, and stood erect and motionless before me. His hat had fallen off, and the moon shone full upon his countenance; it was not the wild expression of intense anguish which dwelt on those hueless and sunken features, nor their quick change to ferocity and defiance, as his eye fell upon me, which made me start back and feel my heart stand still! Notwithstanding the fearful ravages graven in that countenance, once so brilliant with the graces of boyhood, I recognized at one glance those still noble and striking features. It was Reginald Glanville who stood before me! I recovered myself instantly; I threw myself towards him, and called him by his name. He turned hastily, but I would not suffer him to escape, I put my hand upon his arm and drew him towards me. "Glanville," I exclaimed, "it is I! It is your old, old friend Henry Pelham. Good heavens! have I met you at last, and in such a scene?"

Glanville shook me from him in an instant, covered his face with his hands, and sank down with one wild cry which went fearfully through that still place, upon the spot from which he had but just risen. I knelt beside him; I took his hand; I spoke to him in every endearing term that I could think of; and roused and excited as my feelings were by so strange and sudden a meeting, I felt my tears involuntarily falling over the hand which I held in my own. Glanville turned; he looked at me for one moment, as if fully to recognize me; and then, throwing himself into my arms, wept like a child.

It was but for a few minutes that this weakness lasted. He rose suddenly: the whole expression of his countenance was changed; the tears still rolled in large drops down his

cheeks, but the proud, stern character which the features had assumed, seemed to deny the feelings which that feminine weakness had betrayed.

"Pelham," he said, "*you* have seen me thus; I had hoped that no living eye would — This is the last time in which I shall indulge this folly. God bless you! We shall meet again; and this night shall then seem to you like a dream."

I would have answered; but he turned swiftly, passed in one moment through the copse, and in the next had disappeared.

CHAPTER VII.

> You reach a chilling chamber, where you dread
> Damps. CRABBE: *Borough.*

I COULD not sleep the whole of that night, and the next morning I set off early, with the resolution of discovering where Glanville had taken up his abode; it was evident, from his having been so frequently seen, that it must be in the immediate neighbourhood.

I went first to Farmer Sinclair's; they had often remarked him, but could give me no other information. I then proceeded towards the coast. There was a small public-house belonging to Sir Lionel close by the sea-shore; never had I seen a more bleak and dreary prospect than that which stretched for miles around this miserable cabin. How an innkeeper could live there is a mystery to me at this day; I should have imagined it a spot upon which anything but a seagull or a Scotchman would have starved.

"Just the sort of place, however," thought I, "to hear something of Glanville." I went into the house; I inquired, and heard that a strange gentleman *had* been lodging for the last two or three weeks at a cottage about a mile farther up the coast. Thither I bent my steps; and after having met two

crows, and one officer on the preventive service, I arrived safely at my new destination.

It was a house a little better, in outward appearance, than the wretched hut I had just left, for I observe in all situations, and in *all* houses, that the "public" is not too well served; but the situation was equally lonely and desolate. The house itself, which belonged to an individual, half-fisherman and half-smuggler, stood in a sort of bay between two tall, rugged, black cliffs. Before the door hung various nets to dry beneath the genial warmth of a winter's sun; and a broken boat, with its keel uppermost, furnished an admirable habitation for a hen and her family, who appeared to receive *en pension* an old clerico-bachelor-looking raven. I cast a suspicious glance at the last-mentioned personage, which hopped towards me with a very hostile appearance, and entered the threshold with a more rapid step, in consequence of sundry apprehensions of a premeditated assault.

"I understand," said I, to an old, dried, brown female, who looked like a resuscitated red-herring, "that a gentleman is lodging here."

"No, sir," was the answer; "he left us this morning."

The reply came upon me like a shower-bath; I was both chilled and stunned by so unexpected a shock. The old woman, on my renewing my inquiries, took me upstairs to a small, wretched room, to which the damps literally clung. In one corner was a flock-bed, still unmade, and opposite to it a three-legged stool, a chair, and an antique carved oak table, — a donation, perhaps, from some squire in the neighbourhood; on this last were scattered fragments of writing paper, a cracked cup half full of ink, a pen, and a broken ramrod. As I mechanically took up the latter, the woman said, in a charming *patois* which I shall translate, since I cannot do justice to the original: "The gentleman, sir, said he came here for a few weeks to shoot; he brought a gun, a large dog, and a small portmanteau. He stayed nearly a month. He used to spend all the mornings in the fens, though he must have been but a poor shot, for he seldom brought home anything; and we fear, sir, that he was rather out of his mind, for he used to

go out alone at night, and stay sometimes till morning. However, he was quite quiet, and behaved *to us* like a gentleman; so it was no business of ours, only my husband does think —"

"Pray," interrupted I, "why did he leave you so suddenly?"

"Lord, sir, I don't know; but he told us for several days past that he should not stay over the week, and so we were not surprised when he left us this morning at seven o'clock. Poor gentleman, my heart bled for him when I saw him look so pale and ill."

And here I *did* see the good woman's eyes fill with tears; but she wiped them away, and took advantage of the additional persuasion they gave to her natural whine to say, "If, sir, you know of any young gentleman who likes fen-shooting, and wants a nice, pretty, quiet apartment —"

"I will certainly recommend this," said I.

"You see it at present," rejoined *the landlady*, "quite in a litter like; but it is really a sweet place in summer."

"Charming," said I, with a cold shiver, hurrying down the stairs, with a pain in my ear and the rheumatism in my shoulder.

"And this," thought I, "was Glanville's residence for nearly a month! I wonder he did not exhale into a vapour or moisten into a green damp."

I went home by the church-yard. I paused on the spot where I had last seen him. A small gravestone rose above the mound of earth on which he had thrown himself; it was perfectly simple. The date of the year and month (which showed that many weeks had not elapsed since the death of the deceased), and the initials G. D., made the sole inscription on the stone. Beside this tomb was one of a more pompous description, to the memory of a Mrs. Douglas, which had with the simple tumulus nothing in common, unless the initial letter of the surname, corresponding with the latter initial on the neighbouring gavestone, might authorize any connection between them not supported by that similitude of style usually found in the cenotaphs of the same family: the one, indeed, might have covered the grave of a humble villager; the other, the resting-place of the lady of the manor.

I found, therefore, no clew for the labyrinth of surmise; and I went home more vexed and disappointed with my day's expedition than I liked to acknowledge to myself.

Lord Vincent met me in the hall. "Delighted to see you," said he; "I have just been over to —— [the nearest town], in order to discover what sort of savages abide there. Great preparations for a ball, — all the tallow candles in the town are bespoken; and I heard a most uncivilized fiddle —

"'Twang short and sharp, like the shrill swallow's cry.'

The one milliner's shop was full of fat squiresses buying muslin ammunition to make the *ball go off;* and the attics, even at four o'clock, were thronged with rubicund damsels, who were already, as Shakspeare says of waves in a storm, —

"'Curling their monstrous heads.'"

CHAPTER VIII.

JUSQU'AU revoir le ciel vous tienne tous en joie.[1] — MOLIÈRE.

I WAS now pretty well tired of Garrett Park. Lady Roseville was going to H——, where I also had an invitation. Lord Vincent meditated an excursion to Paris. Mr. Davison had already departed. Miss Trafford had been gone, God knows how long, and I was not at all disposed to be left, like "the last rose of summer," in single blessedness at Garrett Park. Vincent, Wormwood, and myself all agreed to leave on the same day.

The morning of our departure arrived. We sat down to breakfast as usual. Lord Vincent's carriage was at the door; his groom was walking about his favorite saddle-horse.

"A beautiful *mare* that is of yours," said I, carelessly looking at it, and reaching across the table to help myself to the *pâté de foie gras.*

"Mare!" exclaimed the incorrigible punster, delighted with

[1] "Heaven keep you merry till we meet again."

my mistake; "I thought that you would have been better acquainted with your *propria quæ* maribus."

"Humph!" said Wormwood, "when I look at you I am always at least reminded of the 'as *in præsenti!*'"

Lord Vincent drew up and looked unutterable anger. Wormwood went on with his dry toast, and Lady Roseville, who that morning had, for a wonder, come down to breakfast, good-naturedly took off the bear. Whether or not his ascetic nature was somewhat modified by the soft smiles and softer voice of the beautiful countess, I cannot pretend to say; but he certainly entered into a conversation with her not much rougher than that of a less gifted individual might have been. They talked of literature, Lord Byron, conversaziones, and Lydia White.[1]

"Miss White," said Lady Roseville, "has not only the best command of language herself, but she gives language to other people. Dinner-parties, usually so stupid, are at her house quite delightful. There I have actually seen English people look happy, and one or two even almost natural."

"Ah!" said Wormwood, "that is indeed rare. With us everything is assumption. We are still exactly like the English suitor to Portia in the 'Merchant of Venice.' We take our doublet from one country, our hose from another, and our behaviour everywhere. Fashion with us is like the man in one of Le Sage's novels, who was constantly changing his servants, and yet had but one suit of livery, which every new-comer, whether he was tall or short, fat or thin, was obliged to wear. We adopt manners, however incongruous and ill-suited to our nature, and thus we always seem awkward and constrained. But Lydia White's *soirées* are indeed agreeable. I remember the last time I dined there. We were six in number; and though we were not blessed with the company of Lord Vincent, the conversation was without 'let or flaw.' Every one, even S——, said good things."

"Indeed!" cried Lord Vincent; "and pray, Mr. Wormwood, what did you say?"

"Why," answered the poet, glancing with a significant sneer

[1] Written before the death of that lady.

over Vincent's somewhat inelegant person, "I thought of your lordship's figure, and said — *grace!*"

"Hem, hem! — '*Gratia* malorum tam infida est quam ipsi,' as Pliny says," muttered Lord Vincent, getting up hastily, and buttoning his coat.

I took the opportunity of the ensuing pause to approach Lady Roseville and whisper my adieus. She was kind and even warm to me in returning them, and pressed me, with something marvellously like sincerity, to be sure to come and see her directly she returned to London. I soon discharged the duties of my remaining farewells, and in less than half an hour was more than a mile distant from Garrett Park and its inhabitants. I can't say that for one who, like myself, is fond of being made a great deal of, there is anything very delightful in those visits into the country. It may be all well enough for married people, who from the mere fact of *being* married are always entitled to certain consideration, — put, for instance, into a bedroom a little larger than a dog-kennel, and accommodated with a looking-glass that does not distort one's features like a paralytic stroke. But we single men suffer a plurality of evils and hardships in intrusting ourselves to the casualties of rural hospitality. We are thrust up into any attic repository, — exposed to the mercy of rats, and the incursions of swallows. Our lavations are performed in a cracked basin, and we are so far removed from human assistance that our very bells sink into silence before they reach half way down the stairs. But two days before I left Garrett Park I myself saw an enormous mouse run away with my shaving-soap, without any possible means of resisting the aggression. Oh! the hardships of a single man are beyond conception; and what is worse, the very misfortune of being single deprives one of all sympathy. "A single man can do this, and a single man ought to do that, and a single man may be put here; and a single man may be sent there," are maxims that I have been in the habit of hearing constantly inculcated, and never disputed, during my whole life; and so, from our fare and treatment being coarse in all matters, they have at last grown to be all matters in course.

CHAPTER IX.

THEREFORE to France. — *Henry IV.*

I WAS rejoiced to find myself again in London. I went to my father's house in Grosvenor Square. All the family — namely, he and my mother — were down at H——; and despite my aversion to the country, I thought I might venture as far as Lady ——'s for a couple of days. Accordingly, to H—— I went. That is really a noble house, — such a hall, such a gallery! I found my mother in the drawing-room, admiring the picture of his late Majesty. She was leaning on the arm of a tall, fair young man. "Henry," said she, introducing me to him, "do you remember your old schoolfellow, Lord George Clinton?"

"Perfectly," said I (though I remembered nothing about him), and we shook hands in the most cordial manner imaginable. By the way, there is no greater bore than being called upon to recollect men with whom one had been at school some ten years back. In the first place, if they were not in one's own set, one most likely scarcely knew them to speak to; and in the second place, if they *were* in one's own set, they are sure to be entirely opposite to the nature we have since acquired: for I scarcely ever knew an instance of the companions of one's boyhood being agreeable to the tastes of one's manhood, — a strong proof of the folly of people who send their sons to Eton and Harrow to *form connections.*

Clinton was on the eve of setting out upon his travels. His intention was to stay a year at Paris, and he was full of the blissful expectations the idea of that city had conjured up. We remained together all the evening, and took a prodigious fancy to one another. Long before I went to bed he had perfectly inoculated me with his own ardour for Continental adventures; and, indeed, I had half promised to accompany him. My mother, when I first told her of my travelling inten-

tions, was in despair; but by degrees she grew reconciled to the idea.

"Your health will improve by a purer air," said she, "and your pronunciation of French is, at present, anything but correct. Take care of yourself, therefore, my dear son, and pray lose no time in engaging Coulon as your *maître de danse*."

My father gave me his blessing and a check on his banker. Within three days I had arranged everything with Clinton, and on the fourth I returned with him to London. Thence we set off to Dover; embarked; dined for the first time in our lives on French ground; were astonished to find so little difference between the two countries, and still more so at hearing even the little children talk French so well;[1] proceeded to Abbeville, — there poor Clinton fell ill. For several days we were delayed in that abominable town, and then Clinton, by the advice of the doctors, returned to England. I went back with him as far as Dover; and then, impatient at my loss of time, took no rest, night or day, till I found myself at Paris.

Young, well born, tolerably good-looking, and never utterly destitute of money, nor grudging whatever enjoyment it could procure, I entered Paris with the ability and the resolution to make the best of those *beaux jours* which so rapidly glide from our possession.

CHAPTER X.

SEEST thou how gayly my young maister goes?
BISHOP HALL: *Satires.*

Qui vit sans folie, n'est pas-si sage qu'il se croit.[2] — LA ROCHEFOUCAULD.

I LOST no time in presenting my letters of introduction, and they were as quickly acknowledged by invitations to balls and dinners. Paris was full to excess, and of a better description

[1] See Addison's Travels for this idea.

[2] "Who lives without folly is not so wise as he thinks."

of English than those who usually overflow that reservoir of the world. My first engagement was to dine with Lord and Lady Bennington, who were among the very few English intimate in the best French houses.

On entering Paris I had resolved to set up "a character;" for I was always of an ambitious nature, and desirous of being distinguished from the ordinary herd. After various cogitations as to the particular one I should assume, I thought nothing appeared more likely to be obnoxious to men, and therefore pleasing to women, than an egregious coxcomb; accordingly, I arranged my hair into ringlets, dressed myself with singular plainness and simplicity (a low person, by the by, would have done just the contrary), and putting on an air of exceeding languor, made my maiden appearance at Lord Bennington's. The party was small, and equally divided between French and English: the former had been all emigrants, and the conversation was chiefly in our own tongue.

I was placed at dinner next to Miss Paulding, an elderly young lady of some notoriety at Paris, very clever, very talkative, and very conceited. A young, pale, ill-natured-looking man sat on her left hand; this was Mr. Aberton.

"Dear me!" said Miss Paulding, "what a pretty chain that is of yours, Mr. Aberton."

"Yes," said Mr. Aberton, "I know it must be pretty, for I got it at Breguet's with the watch." (How common people always buy their opinions with their goods, and regulate the height of the former by the mere price or fashion of the latter!)

"Pray, Mr. Pelham," said Miss Paulding, turning to me, "have you got one of Breguet's watches yet?"

"Watch!" said I. "*Do* you think *I* could ever wear a watch? I know nothing so plebeian. What can any one, but a man of business who has nine hours for his counting-house and one for his dinner, ever possibly want to know the time for? 'An assignation,' you will say, — true; but if a man is worth having, he is surely worth waiting for!"

Miss Paulding opened her eyes, and Mr. Aberton his mouth. A pretty, lively Frenchwoman opposite (Madame d'Anville)

laughed, and immediately joined in our conversation, which, on my part, was during the whole dinner kept up in exactly the same strain.

Madame d'Anville was delighted, and Miss Paulding astonished. Mr. Aberton muttered to a fat, foolish Lord Luscombe, "What a damnation puppy!" and every one, even to old Madame de G——s, seemed to consider me impertinent enough to become the rage.

As for me, I was perfectly satisfied with the effect I had produced, and I went away the first, in order to give the men an opportunity of abusing me; for whenever the men abuse, the women, to support alike their coquetry and the conversation, think themselves called upon to defend.

The next day I rode into the Champs Élysées. I always valued myself particularly upon my riding, and my horse was both the most fiery and the most beautiful in Paris. The first person I saw was Madame d'Anville. At this moment I was reining in my horse, and conscious, as the wind waved my long curls, that I was looking to the very best advantage; I made my horse bound towards her carriage (which she immediately stopped), and made at once my salutations and my court.

"I am going," said she, "to the Duchesse D——'s this evening, — it is *her* night; do come."

"I don't know her," said I.

"Tell me your hôtel, and I 'll send you an invitation before dinner," rejoined Madame d'Anville.

"I lodge," said I, "at the Hôtel de ——, Rue de Rivoli, on the second floor at present. Next year, I suppose, according to the usual gradations in the life of a *garçon*, I shall be on the third; for here the purse and the person seem to be playing at see-saw, — the latter rises as the former descends."

We went on conversing for about a quarter of an hour, in which I endeavoured to make the pretty Frenchwoman believe that all the good opinion I possessed of myself the day before I had that morning entirely transferred to her account.

As I rode home I met Mr. Aberton with three or four other men; with that glaring good-breeding so peculiar to the

English, he instantly directed their eyes towards me in one mingled and concentrated stare. "*N'importe!*" thought I; "they must be devilish clever fellows if they can find a single fault either in my horse or myself."

CHAPTER XI.

> LUD! what a group the motley scene discloses, —
> False wits, false wives, false virgins, and false spouses.
> GOLDSMITH: *Epilogue to the Comedy of the Sisters.*

MADAME D'ANVILLE kept her promise, — the invitation was duly sent; and accordingly, at half-past ten, to the Rue d'Anjou I drove.

The rooms were already full. Lord Bennington was standing by the door, and close by him, looking exceedingly *distrait*, was my old friend Lord Vinceut. They both came towards me at the same moment. "Strive not," thought I, looking at the stately demeanour of the one, and the humorous expression of countenance in the other, — "strive not, Tragedy nor Comedy, to engross a Garrick." I spoke first to Lord Bennington, for I knew he would be the sooner despatched; and then for the next quarter of an hour found myself overflowed with all the witticisms poor Lord Vincent had for days been obliged to retain. I made an engagement to dine with him at Véry's the next day, and then glided off towards Madame d'Anville.

She was surrounded with men, and talking to each with that vivacity which in a Frenchwoman is so graceful, and in an Englishwoman would be so vulgar. Though her eyes were not directed towards me, she saw me approach by that instinctive perception which all coquettes possess, and suddenly altering her seat, made way for me beside her. I did not lose so favourable an opportunity of gaining *her* good graces and losing those of all the male animals around her. I sank down on the vacant chair and contrived, with the most unabashed

effrontery, and yet with the most consummate dexterity, to make everything that I said pleasing to her revolting to some one of her attendants. Wormwood himself could not have succeeded better. One by one they dropped off, and we were left alone among the crowd. Then, indeed, I changed the whole tone of my conversation. Sentiment succeeded to satire, and the pretence of feeling to that of affectation. In short, I was so resolved to please that I could scarcely fail to succeed.

In this main object of the evening I was not however solely employed. I should have been very undeserving of that character for observation which I flatter myself I peculiarly deserve, if I had not, during the three hours I stayed at Madame D——'s, conned over every person remarkable for anything, from rank to a ribbon. The Duchesse herself was a fair, pretty, clever woman, with manners rather English than French. She was leaning, at the time I paid my respects to her, on the arm of an Italian count tolerably well known at Paris. Poor O——i! I hear he is since married: he did not deserve so heavy a calamity!

Sir Henry Millington was close by her, carefully packed up in his coat and waistcoat. Certainly that man is the best padder in Europe.

"Come and sit by me, Millington," cried old Lady Oldtown; "I have a good story to tell you of the Duc de ——."

Sir Henry, with difficulty, turned round his magnificent head, and muttered out some unintelligible excuse. The fact was that poor Sir Henry was not that evening *made* to sit down, — he had only his *standing-up-coat* on! Lady Oldtown, Heaven knows, is easily consoled. She supplied the place of the baronet with a most superbly mustachioed German.

"Who," said I to Madame d'Anville, "are those pretty girls in white, talking with such eagerness to Mr. Aberton and Lord Luscombe?"

"What!" said the Frenchwoman, "have you been ten days in Paris and not been introduced to the Miss Carltons? Let me tell you that your reputation among your countrymen at Paris depends solely upon their verdict."

"And upon your favour," added I.

"Ah!" said she, "you *must* have had your origin in France; you have something about you almost *Parisian.*"

"Pray," said I (after having duly acknowledged this compliment, the very highest that a Frenchwoman can bestow), "what did you really and candidly think of our countrymen during your residence in England?"

"I will tell you," answered Madame d'Anville: "they are brave, honest, generous, *mais ils sont demi-barbares!*"[1]

CHAPTER XII.

Pia mater
Plus quam se sapere, et virtutibus esse priorem
Vult, et ait prope vera.[2] — Horace.

Vere (*y*) mihi festus atras
Eximet curas.[3] — Horace.

The next morning I received a letter from my mother. "My dear Henry," began my affectionate and incomparable parent, —

My dear Henry, — You have now fairly entered the world; and though at your age my advice may be but little followed, my experience cannot altogether be useless. I shall therefore make no apology for a few precepts, which I trust may tend to make you a wiser and a better man.

I hope, in the first place, that you have left your letter at the ambassador's, and that you will not fail to go there as often as possible. Pay your court in particular to Lady ——. She is a charming person, universally popular, and one of the very few English people to whom one may safely be civil. *A propos* of English civility, you have, I hope, by this time discovered that you have to assume a very different manner

[1] "But they are half barbarians."

[2] With sage advice and many a sober truth
The pious mother moulds to shape the youth.
Hawke's Paraphrase.

[3] The application of this motto rests solely upon an untranslatable play of words.

with French people from that with our own countrymen: with us, the least appearance of feeling or enthusiasm is certain to be ridiculed everywhere; but in France you may venture to seem not quite devoid of all natural sentiments, — indeed, if you affect enthusiasm they will give you credit for genius, and they will place all the qualities of the heart to the account of the head. You know that in England if you seem desirous of a person's acquaintance, you are sure to lose it, — they imagine you have some design upon their wives or their dinners; but in France you can never lose by politeness: nobody will call your civility forwardness and pushing. If the Princesse de T—— and the Duchesse de D—— ask you to their houses (which indeed they will, directly you have left your letters), go there two or three times a week, if only for a few minutes in the evening. It is very hard to be *acquainted* with great French people, but *when* you are, it is your own fault if you are not *intimate* with them.

Most English people have a kind of diffidence and scruple at calling in the evening: this is perfectly misplaced; the French are never ashamed of themselves, like us, whose persons, families, and houses are never fit to be seen unless they are dressed out for a party.

Don't imagine that the ease of French manners is at all like what *we* call ease: you must not lounge on your chair, nor put your feet upon a stool, nor forget yourself for one single moment when you are talking with women.

You have heard a great deal about the gallantries of the French ladies: but remember that they demand infinitely greater attention than Englishwomen do; and that after a month's incessant devotion you may lose everything by a moment's neglect.

You will not, my dear son, misinterpret these hints. I suppose, of course, that all your *liaisons* are Platonic.

Your father is laid up with the gout and dreadfully ill-tempered and peevish; however, I keep out of the way as much as possible. I dined yesterday at Lady Roseville's: she praised you very much, said your manners were particularly good, and that no one, if he pleased, could be at once so brilliantly original, yet so completely *bon ton*. Lord Vincent is, I understand, at Paris; though very tiresome with his learning and Latin, he is exceedingly clever and much in vogue: be sure to cultivate his acquaintance.

If you are ever at a loss as to the individual character of a person you wish to gain, the general knowledge of human nature will teach you one infallible specific, — *flattery!* The quantity and quality may vary according to the exact niceties of art; but in any quantity and in any quality, it is more or less acceptable, and therefore certain to please.

Only never (or at least very rarely) flatter when other people, besides the one to be flattered, are by; in that case you offend the rest, and you make even your intended dupe ashamed to be pleased.

In general, weak minds think only of others, and yet seem only occupied with themselves; *you*, on the contrary, must appear wholly engrossed with those about you, and yet never have a single idea which does not terminate in yourself. A fool, my dear Henry, flatters himself; a wise man flatters the fool.

God bless you, my dear child! Take care of your health, don't forget Coulon, and believe me your most affectionate mother,

F. P.

By the time I had read this letter and dressed myself for the evening, Vincent's carriage was at the door. I hate the affectation of keeping people waiting, and went down so quickly that I met his facetious lordship upon the stairs. "Devilish windy," said I, as we were getting into the carriage.

"Yes," said Vincent; "but the moral Horace reminds us of our remedies as well as our misfortune, —

"'Jam *galeam* Pallas, et ægida,
Currusque parat,' —

that is, 'Providence, that prepares the *gale*, gives us also a greatcoat and a carriage.'"

We were not long driving to the Palais Royal. Véry's was crowded to excess. "A very low set!" said Lord Vincent (who, being half a Liberal, is of course a thorough aristocrat), looking round at the various English who occupied the apartment.

There was, indeed, a motley congregation, — country esquires; extracts from the Universities; half-pay officers; city clerks in frogged coats and mustachios; two or three of a better-looking description, but in reality half-swindlers, half-gentlemen: all, in short, fit specimens of that wandering tribe which spread over the Continent the renown and the ridicule of good old England.

"Garçon, garçon," cried a stout gentleman, who made one of three at the table next to us, "donnez-nous une sole frite pour un, et des pommes de terre pour trois!"

"Humph!" said Lord Vincent, "fine ideas of English taste these *garçons* must entertain; men who preferred fried soles and potatoes to the various delicacies they can command here, might, by the same perversion of taste, prefer Bloomfield's poems to Byron's. Delicate taste depends solely upon the physical construction; and a man who has it not in cookery, must want it in literature. *Fried sole and potatoes!* If I had written a volume whose merit was in elegance, I would not show it to such a man; but he might be an admirable critic upon Cobbett's 'Register,' or 'Every Man his own Brewer.'"

"Excessively true," said I; "what shall we order?"

"D'abord, des huîtres d' Ostende," said Vincent; "as to the rest," taking hold of the carte, "deliberare utilia mora utilissima est."[1]

We were soon engaged in all the pleasures and pains of a dinner.

"Petimus," said Lord Vincent, helping himself to some *poulet à l'Austerlitz*, "petimus bene vivere, — quod petis, hic est."[2]

We were not, however, assured of that fact at the termination of dinner. If half the dishes were well conceived and better executed, the other half were proportionably bad. Véry is indeed no longer the prince of restaurateurs. The low English who have flocked thither have entirely ruined the place. What waiter, what cook *can* possibly respect men who take no soup, and begin with a *rôti;* who know neither what is good nor what is bad; who eat *rognons* at dinner instead of at breakfast, and fall into raptures over *sauce Robert* and *pieds de cochon;* who cannot tell, at the first taste, whether the *beaune* is *première qualité*, or the *fricassée* made of yesterday's chicken; who suffer in the stomach after a *champignon*, and die with indigestion of a *truffe?* Oh, English people, English people, why can you not stay and perish of apoplexy and Yorkshire-pudding at home?

By the time we had drunk our coffee it was considerably

[1] "To deliberate on things useful is the most useful delay."

[2] "We seek to *live well*, — what you seek is here."

past nine o'clock, and Vincent had business at the ambassador's before ten; we therefore parted for the night.

"What do you think of Véry's?" said I, as we were at the door.

"Why," replied Vincent, "when I recall the astonishing heat of the place, which has almost sent me to sleep, the exceeding number of times in which that *bécasse* had been reroasted, and the extortionate length of our bills, I say of Véry's what Hamlet said of the world,—'Weary, stale, and unprofitable!'"

CHAPTER XIII.

I WOULD fight with proad swords, and sink point on the first plood drawn like a gentlemans.—*The Chronicles of the Canongate.*

I STROLLED idly along the Palais Royal (which English people, in some silly proverb, call the *capital* of Paris; whereas no Frenchman of any rank, nor Frenchwoman of any respectability, is ever seen in its promenades), till, being somewhat curious to enter some of the smaller *cafés*, I went into one of the meanest of them, took up a *Journal des Spectacles*, and called for some lemonade. At the next table to me sat two or three Frenchmen, evidently of inferior rank, and talking very loudly over England and the English. Their attention was soon fixed upon me.

Have you ever observed that if people are disposed to think ill of you, nothing so soon determines them to do so as any act of yours which, however innocent and inoffensive, differs from their ordinary habits and customs? No sooner had my lemonade made its appearance than I perceived an increased sensation among my neighbours of the next table. In the first place, lemonade is not much drunk, as you may suppose, among the French in winter; and in the second, my beverage had an appearance of ostentation, from being one of the dearest articles I could have called for. Unhappily I dropped my

newspaper, — it fell under the Frenchmen's table; instead of calling the *garçon*, I was foolish enough to stoop for it myself. It was exactly under the feet of one of the Frenchmen. I asked him, with the greatest civility, to move; he made no reply. I could not, for the life of me, refrain from giving him a slight, very slight, push; the next moment he moved in good earnest: the whole party sprang up as he set the example. The offended leg gave three terrific stamps upon the ground, and I was immediately assailed by a whole volley of unintelligible abuse. At that time I was very little accustomed to French vehemence, and perfectly unable to reply to the vituperations I received.

Instead of answering them, I therefore deliberated what was best to be done. If, thought I, I walk away, they will think me a coward and insult me in the streets; if I challenge them, I shall have to fight with men probably no better than shop-keepers; if I strike this most noisy amongst them, he *may* be silenced, or he *may* demand satisfaction, — if the former, well and good; if the latter, why, I shall have a better excuse for fighting him than I should have now.

My resolution was therefore taken. I was never more free from passion in my life; and it was therefore with the utmost calmness and composure that in the midst of my antagonist's harangue I raised my hand and — quietly knocked him down.

He rose in a moment. "*Sortons*," said he, in a low tone; "a Frenchman never forgives a blow!"

At that moment an Englishman, who had been sitting unnoticed in an obscure corner of the *café*, came up and took me aside.

"Sir," said he, "don't think of fighting the man, — he is a tradesman in the Rue St. Honoré; I myself have seen him behind the counter. Remember that 'a ram may kill a butcher.'"

"Sir," I replied, "I thank you a thousand times for your information. Fight, however, I must; and I 'll give you, like the Irishman, my reasons afterwards: perhaps you will be my second?"

"With pleasure," said the Englishman (a Frenchman would have said "*with pain!*").

We left the *café* together. My countryman asked them if he should go to the gunsmith's for the pistols.

"Pistols!" said the Frenchman's second, — "we will only fight with swords."

"No, no," said my new friend. "'On ne prend pas le lièvre au tambourin.' We are the challenged, and therefore have the choice of weapons."

Luckily I overheard this dispute, and called to my second. "Swords or pistols," said I, "it is quite the same to me; I am not bad at either. Only *do* make haste."

Swords, then, were chosen, and soon procured. Frenchmen never grow cool upon their quarrels; and as it was a fine, clear, starlight night, we went forthwith to the Bois de Boulogne. We fixed our ground on a spot tolerably retired, and, I should think, pretty often frequented for the same purpose. I was exceedingly confident, for I knew myself to have few equals in the art of fencing; and I had all the advantage of coolness, which my hero was a great deal too much in earnest to possess. We joined swords, and in a very few moments I discovered that my opponent's life was at my disposal.

"*C'est bien,*" thought I; "for once I'll behave handsomely."

The Frenchman made a desperate lunge. I struck his sword from his hand, caught it instantly, and presenting it to him again said, —

"I think myself peculiarly fortunate that I may now apologize for the affront I have put upon you. Will you permit my sincerest apologies to suffice? A man who can so well resent an injury can forgive one."

Was there ever a Frenchman not taken by a fine phrase? My hero received the sword with a low bow; the tears came into his eyes.

"Sir," said he, "you have *twice* conquered."

We left the spot with the greatest amity and affection, and re-entered, with a profusion of bows, our several *fiacres*.

"Let me," I said, when I found myself alone with my second,

"let me thank you most cordially for your assistance; and allow me to cultivate an acquaintance so singularly begun. I lodge at the Hôtel de ——, Rue de Rivoli; my name is Pelham. Yours is —"

"Thornton," replied my countryman. "I will lose no time in profiting by an offer of acquaintance which does me so much honour."

With these and various other fine speeches we employed the time till I was set down at my hôtel; and my companion, drawing his cloak around him, departed on foot to fulfil (he said, with a mysterious air) a certain assignation in the Faubourg St. Germain.

CHAPTER XIV.

Erat homo ingeniosus, acutus, acer, et qui plurimum et salis haberet et fellis, nec candoris minus.[1] — Pliny.

I do not know a more difficult character to describe than Lord Vincent's. Did I imitate certain writers, who think that the whole art of portraying individual character is to seize hold of some prominent peculiarity and to introduce this distinguishing trait in all times and in all scenes, the difficulty would be removed. I should only have to present to the reader a man whose conversation was nothing but alternate jest and quotation, — a due union of Yorick and Partridge. This would, however, be rendering great injustice to the character I wish to delineate. There were times, when Vincent was earnestly engrossed in discussion, in which a jest rarely escaped him, and quotation was introduced only as a serious illustration, not as a humorous peculiarity. He possessed great miscellaneous erudition and a memory perfectly surprising for its fidelity and extent. He was a severe critic, and had a peculiar

[1] He was a clever and able man, acute, sharp, with abundance of wit, and no less of candour

art of quoting from each author he reviewed some part that particularly told against him. Like most men, if in the theory of philosophy he was tolerably rigid, in his practice he was more than tolerably loose. By his tenets you would have considered him a very Cato for stubbornness and sternness; yet was he a very child in his concession to the whim of the moment. Fond of meditation and research, he was still fonder of mirth and amusement; and while he was among the most instructive, he was also the boonest of companions. When alone with me or with men whom he imagined like me, his pedantry (for more or less, he always *was* pedantic) took only a jocular tone; with the *savant* or the *bel esprit* it became grave, searching, and sarcastic. He was rather a contradictor than a favourer of ordinary opinions, and this perhaps led him not unoften into paradox; yet was there much soundness even in his most vehement notions, and the strength of mind which made him think only for himself, was visible in all the productions it created. I have hitherto only given his conversation in one of its moods; henceforth I shall be just enough occasionally to be dull, and to present it sometimes to the reader in a graver tone.

Buried deep beneath the surface of his character was a hidden, yet a restless, ambition; but this was perhaps, at present, a secret even to himself. We know not our own characters till time teaches us self-knowledge: if we are *wise*, we may thank ourselves; if we are *great*, we must thank fortune.

It was this insight into Vincent's nature which drew us closer together. I recognized in the man, who as yet was playing a part, a resemblance to myself, while he perhaps saw at times that I was somewhat better than the voluptuary, and somewhat wiser than the coxcomb, which were all that at present it suited me to appear.

In person, Vincent was short, and ungracefully formed; but his countenance was singularly fine. His eyes were dark, bright, and penetrating, and his forehead (high and thoughtful) corrected the playful smile of his mouth, which might otherwise have given to his features too great an expression of levity. He was not positively ill-dressed, yet he paid no

attention to any external art, except cleanliness. His usual garb was a brown coat much too large for him, a colored neckcloth, a spotted waistcoat, gray trousers, and short gaiters; add to these gloves of most unsullied doeskin and a curiously thick cane, and the portrait is complete.

In manners he was civil or rude, familiar or distant, just as the whim seized him; never was there any address less common and less artificial. What a rare gift, by the by, is that of manners,—how difficult to define, how much more difficult to impart! Better for a man to possess them than wealth, beauty, or even talent, if it fall short of genius; they will more than supply all. He who enjoys their advantages in the highest degree,—namely, he who can please, penetrate, persuade, as the object may require,—possesses the subtlest secret of the diplomatist and the statesman, and wants nothing but luck and opportunity to become "great."

CHAPTER XV.

Le plaisir de la société entre les amis se cultive par une ressemblance de goût sur ce qui regarde les mœurs, et par quelque différence d'opinions sur les sciences; par là ou l'on s'affermit dans ses sentiments, ou l'on s'exerce et l'on s'instruit par la dispute.[1] — La Bruyère.

There was a party at Monsieur de V——e's to which Vincent and myself were the only Englishmen invited; accordingly, as the Hôtel de V—— was in the same street as my hôtel, we dined together at my rooms, and walked from thence to the Minister's house.

The party was as stiff and formal as such assemblies invariably are, and we were both delighted when we espied Monsieur d'A——, a man of much conversational talent and some

[1] "The pleasure of society amongst friends is cultivated by resemblance of taste as to manners, but some difference of opinion as to mental acquisitions. Thus, while it is confirmed by congeniality of sentiments, it gains exercise and instruction by intellectual discussion."

celebrity as an ultra writer, forming a little group in one corner of the room.

We took advantage of our acquaintance with the urbane Frenchman to join his party; the conversation turned almost entirely on literary subjects. Allusion being made to Schlegel's "History of Literature," and the severity with which he speaks of Helvetius and the philosophers of his school, we began to discuss what harm the freethinkers in philosophy had effected.

"For my part," said Vincent, "I am not able to divine why we are supposed, in works where there is much truth and little falsehood, much good and a little evil, to see only the evil and the falsehood, to the utter exclusion of the truth and the good. All men whose minds are sufficiently labourious or acute to love the reading of metaphysical inquiries will by the *same* labour and acuteness separate the chaff from the corn, the false from the true. It is the young, the light, the superficial who are easily misled by error, and incapable of discerning its fallacy; but tell me if it is the light, the young, the superficial who are in the habit of reading the abstruse and subtle speculations of the philosopher. No, no; believe me that it is *the very studies Monsieur Schlegel recommends* which do harm to morality and virtue,—*it is the study of literature itself*, the play, the poem, the novel, which all minds, however frivolous, can enjoy and understand, that constitute the real foes of religion and moral improvement."

"*Ma foi!*" cried Monsieur de G—— (who was a little writer, and a great reader, of romances), "why, you would not deprive us of the politer literature,—you would not bid us shut up our novels and burn our theatres?"

"Certainly not," replied Vincent; "and it is in this particular that I differ from certain modern philosophers of our own country, for whom, for the most part, I entertain the highest veneration. I would not deprive life of a single grace or a single enjoyment, but I would counteract whatever is pernicious in whatever is elegant. If among my flowers there is a snake, I would not root up my flowers, I would kill the snake. Thus, who are they that derive from fiction and literature a

prejudicial effect? We have seen already,—the light and superficial. *But* who are they that derive profit from them? They who enjoy well regulated and discerning minds. Who pleasure? *All mankind!* Would it not therefore be better, instead of depriving some of profit, and all of pleasure, by banishing poetry and fiction from our Utopia, to correct the minds which find evil, where, if they were properly instructed, they would find good? Whether we agree with Helvetius that all men are born with an equal capacity of improvement, or merely go the length, with all other metaphysicians, that education can improve the human mind to an extent yet incalculable, it must be quite clear that we can give sound views, instead of fallacies, and make common truths as easy to discern and adopt as common errors. But if we effect this, which we all allow is so easy, with our children; if we strengthen their minds, instead of weakening them, and clear their vision, rather than confuse it,—from that moment we remove the prejudicial effects of fiction; and just as we have taught them to use a knife without cutting their fingers, we teach them to make use of fiction without perverting it to their prejudice. *What philosopher* was ever hurt by reading the novels of L——, or seeing the comedies of Molière? You understand me, then, Monsieur de G——: I do, it is true, think that polite literature (as it is termed) is prejudicial to the superficial, but, for that reason, I would not do away with the literature, I would do away with the superficial."

"I deny," said M. d'A——, "that this is so easy a task: you cannot make all *men* wise."

"No," replied Vincent; "but you can all *children*,—at least to a certain extent. Since you cannot deny the prodigious effects of education, you *must* allow that they will at least give common-sense; for if they cannot do this, they can do nothing. Now common-sense is all that is necessary to distinguish what is good and evil, whether it be in life or in books; but then your education must not be that of public teaching and private fooling, you must not counteract the effects of common-sense by instilling prejudice or encouraging weakness,—your education may not be carried to the utmost

goal, but as far as it does go, you must see that the road is clear. Now, for instance, with regard to fiction, you must not first, as is done in all modern education, admit the disease, and then dose with warm water to expel it: you must not put fiction into your child's hands, and not give him a single principle to guide his judgment respecting it, till his mind has got wedded to the poison, and too weak, by its long use, to digest the antidote. No, first fortify his intellect by reason, and you may then please his fancy by fiction. Do not excite his imagination with love and glory till you can instruct his judgment as to what love and glory *are*. Teach him, in short, to *reflect*, before you permit him full indulgence to *imagine*."

Here there was a pause. Monsieur d'A—— looked very ill-pleased, and poor Monsieur de G—— thought that somehow or other his romance-writing was called into question. In order to soothe them, I introduced some subject which permitted a little national flattery; the conversation then turned insensibly on the character of the French people.

"Never," said Vincent, "has there been a character more often described,—never one less understood. You have been termed superficial. I think, of all people, that you least deserve the accusation. With regard to the *few*, your philosophers, your mathematicians, your men of science, are consulted by those of other nations as some of their profoundest authorities. With regard to the *many*, the charge is still more unfounded. Compare your mob, whether of gentlemen or plebeians, to those of Germany, Italy,—even England,—and I own, in spite of my national prepossessions, that the comparison is infinitely in your favour. The country gentleman, the lawyer, the *petit-maître* of England, are proverbially inane and ill-informed. With you, the classes of society that answer to those respective grades have much information in literature, and often not a little in science. In like manner, your tradesmen and your servants are of better cultivated and less prejudiced minds than those ranks in England. The fact is that *all* with you pretend to be *savants*, and this is the chief reason why you have been censured as shallow. We see

your fine gentleman or your *petit bourgeois* give himself the airs of a critic or a philosopher; and because he is neither a Scaliger nor a Newton, we forget that he is *only* the *bourgeois* or the *petit-maître*, and brand all your philosophers and critics with the censure of superficiality which this shallow individual of a shallow order may justly have deserved. We the English, it is true, do not expose ourselves thus; our dandies, our tradesmen, do not vent second-rate philosophy on the human mind nor on *les beaux-arts*. But why is this? Not because they are better informed than their correspondent ciphers in France, but because they are much worse informed; not because they can say a great deal more on the subject, but because they can say nothing at all."

"You do us more than justice," said Monsieur d'A——, "in this instance: are you disposed to do us justice in another? It is a favourite propensity of your countrymen to accuse us of heartlessness and want of feeling. Think you that this accusation is deserved?"

"By no means," replied Vincent. "The same cause that brought on you the erroneous censure we have before mentioned appears to me also to have created this; namely, a sort of Palais Royal vanity, common to all your nation, which induces you to make as much display at the shop window as possible. You show great cordiality, and even enthusiasm, to strangers; you turn your back on them, you forget them. 'How heartless!' cry we. Not at all. The English show no cordiality, no enthusiasm to strangers, it is true; but they equally turn their backs on them and equally forget them!. The only respect, therefore, in which they differ from you is the previous kindness. Now if we are to receive strangers, I can really see no reason why we are not to be as civil to them as possible; and so far from imputing the desire to please them to a bad heart, I think it a thousand times more amiable and benevolent than telling them, *à l'anglaise*, by your morosity and reserve, that you do not care a pin what becomes of them. If I am only to walk a mile with a man, why should I not make that mile as pleasant to him as I can? Or why, above all, if I choose to be sulky and tell him to go and be d—d, am I to

swell out my chest, color with conscious virtue, and cry, 'See what a good heart I have'?[1] Ah! Monsieur d'A——, since benevolence is inseparable from all morality, it must be clear that there is a benevolence in little things as well as in great, and that he who strives to make his fellow-creatures happy, though only for an instant, is a much better man than he who is indifferent to, or — what is worse — despises it. Nor do I, to say truth, see that kindness to an acquaintance is at all destructive to sincerity to a friend; on the contrary, I have yet to learn that you are (according to the customs of your country) worse friends, worse husbands, or worse fathers than we are."

"What!" cried I, "you forget yourself, Vincent. How can the private virtues be cultivated without a coal fire? Is not domestic affection a synonymous term with *domestic hearth?* And where do you find either, except in honest old England?"

"True," replied Vincent; "and it is certainly impossible for a father and his family to be as fond of each other on a bright day in the Tuileries or at Versailles, with music and dancing and fresh air, as they would be in a back parlour by a smoky hearth occupied entirely by *le bon père et la bonne mère,* while the poor little children sit at the other end of the table, whispering and shivering, debarred the vent of all natural spirits for fear of making a noise, and strangely uniting the idea of the domestic hearth with that of a hobgoblin, and the association of dear papa with that of a birch-rod."

We all laughed at this reply, and Monsieur d'A——, rising to depart, said, "Well, well, milord, your countrymen are great generalizers in philosophy; they reduce human actions to two grand touchstones. All hilarity they consider the sign of a shallow mind, and all kindness the token of a false heart."

[1] Mr. Pelham, it will be remembered, has prevised the reader that Lord Vincent was somewhat addicted to paradox. His opinions on the French character are to be taken with a certain reserve. — AUTHOR.

CHAPTER XVI.

Quis sapiens bono
Confidat fragili ?[1] — Seneca.

Grammatici certant, et adhuc sub judice lis est[2] — Horace.

When I first went to Paris, I took a French master to perfect me in the Parisian pronunciation. This "Haberdasher of pronouns" was a person of the name of Margot. He was a tall, solemn man, with a face of the most imperturbable gravity. He would have been inestimable as an undertaker. His hair was of a pale yellow; you would have thought it had caught a bilious complaint from his complexion,—the latter was, indeed, of so sombre a saffron that it looked as if ten livers had been forced into a jaundice in order to supply its color. His forehead was high, bald, and very narrow. His cheek-bones were extremely prominent, and his cheeks so thin that they seemed happier than Pyramus and Thisbe, and kissed each other inside without any separation or division. His face was as sharp and almost as long as an inverted pyramid, and was garnished on either side by a miserable, half-starved whisker, which seemed scarcely able to maintain itself amidst the general symptoms of atrophy and decay. This charming countenance was supported by a figure so long, so straight, so shadowy that you might have taken it for the Monument in a consumption!

But the chief characteristic of the man was the utter and wonderful gravity I have before spoken of. You could no more have coaxed a smile out of his countenance than you could out of the poker; and yet Monsieur Margot was by no

[1] "What wise man confides in the fragile ?"

[2] "Grammarians dispute, and the matter is still under consideration of the judge."

means a melancholy man. He loved his joke and his wine and his dinner just as much as if he had been of a fatter frame; and it was a fine specimen of the practical antithesis to hear a good story or a jovial expression leap friskily out of that long, curved mouth,—it was at once a paradox and a bathos; it was the mouse coming out of its hole in Ely Cathedral.

I said that this gravity was Monsieur Margot's most especial characteristic, I forgot,—he had two others equally remarkable: the one was an ardent admiration for the chivalrous, the other an ardent admiration for himself. Both of these are traits common enough in a Frenchman, but in Monsieur Margot their excesses rendered them *uncommon*. He was a most ultra specimen of *le chevalier amoureux*,—a mixture of Don Quixote and the Duc de Lauzun. Whenever he spoke of the present tense, even *en professeur*, he always gave a sigh to the preterite and an anecdote of Bayard; whenever he conjugated a verb, he paused to tell me that the favorite one of his female pupils was *je t'aime*.

In short, he had tales of his own good fortune and of other people's brave exploits which, without much exaggeration, were almost as long, and had perhaps as little substance, as himself. But the former was his favourite topic: to hear him, one would have imagined that his face, in borrowing the sharpness of the needle, had borrowed also its attraction,—and then the prettiness of Monsieur Margot's modesty!

"It is very extraordinary," said he, "very extraordinary, for I have no time to give myself up to those affairs; it is not, monsieur, as if I had your leisure to employ all the little preliminary arts of creating *la belle passion*. *Non, monsieur*, I go to church, to the play, to the Tuileries for a brief relaxation,—and *me voilà partout accablé* with my good fortune. I am not handsome, monsieur,—at least, not *very;* it is true that I have expression, a certain *air noble* (my first cousin, monsieur, is the Chevalier *de* Margot), and, above all, *soul* in my physiognomy: the women love soul, monsieur,—something intellectual and spiritual always attracts them. Yet my success certainly is singular."

"*Bah! monsieur,*" replied I; "with dignity, expression, and soul, how could the heart of any Frenchwoman resist you? No, you do yourself injustice. It was said of Cæsar that he was great without an effort; much more, then, may Monsieur Margot be happy without an exertion."

"Ah, monsieur!" rejoined the Frenchman, still looking—

> "As weak, as earnest, and as gravely out
> As sober Lanesbro' dancing with the gout,"—

"Ah, monsieur, there is a depth and truth in your remarks worthy of Montaigne. As it is impossible to account for the caprices of women, so it is impossible for ourselves to analyze the merit they discover in us. But, monsieur, hear me,—at the house where I lodge there is an English lady *en pension. Eh bien, monsieur,* you guess the rest; she has taken a caprice for me, and this very night she will admit me to her apartment. She is very handsome,—*ah, qu'elle est belle! une jolie petite bouche, une denture éblouissante, un nez tout à fait grec;* in fine, quite a *bouton de rose.*"

I expressed my envy at Monsieur Margot's good fortune, and when he had sufficiently dilated upon it, he withdrew. Shortly afterwards Vincent entered. "I have a dinner invitation for both of us to-day," said he: "you will come?"

"Most certainly," replied I; "but who is the person we are to honour?"

"A Madame Laurent," replied Vincent,—"one of those ladies only found at Paris, who live upon anything rather than their income. She keeps a tolerable table, haunted with Poles, Russians, Austrians, and idle Frenchmen, *peregrinæ gentis amœnum hospitium.* As yet she has not the happiness to be acquainted with an Englishman (though she boards one of our countrywomen), and as she is desirous of making her fortune as soon as possible, she is very anxious of having that honour. She has heard vast reports of our wealth and wisdom, and flatters herself that we are so many ambulatory Indies; in good truth, a Frenchwoman thinks she is never in want of a fortune as long as there 's a rich fool in the world.

"'Stultitiam patiuntur opes,'

is her hope, and

"'Ut tu *fortunam*, sic nos te, Celse, feremus,'

is her motto."

"Madame Laurent!" repeated I: "why, surely that is the name of Monsieur Margot's landlady."

"I hope not," cried Vincent, "for the sake of our dinner; he reflects no credit on her good cheer,—

"'Who eats fat dinners should himself be fat.'"

"At all events," said I, "we can try the good lady for once. I am very anxious to see a countrywoman of ours, probably the very one you speak of, whom Monsieur Margot eulogizes in glowing colors, and who has, moreover, taken a violent fancy for my solemn preceptor. What think you of that, Vincent?"

"Nothing extraordinary," replied Vincent; "the lady only exclaims with the moralist—

"'Love, virtue, valour, yea, all human charms
Are shrunk and centred *in that heap of bones.*
Oh, there are wondrous beauties in the *grave!*'"

I made some punning rejoinder, and we sallied out to earn an appetite in the Tuileries for Madame Laurent's dinner.

At the hour of half-past five we repaired to our engagement. Madame Laurent received us with the most evident satisfaction, and introduced us forthwith to our countrywoman. She was a pretty, fair, shrewd-looking person, with an eye and lip which, unless it greatly belied her, showed her much more inclined to be merry and wise than honest and true.

Presently Monsieur Margot made his appearance. Though very much surprised at seeing me, he did not appear the least jealous of my attentions to his *inamorata.* Indeed, the good gentleman was far too much pleased with himself to be susceptible to the suspicions common to less fortunate lovers. At dinner I sat next to the pretty Englishwoman, whose name was Green.

"Monsieur Margot," said I, "had often spoken to me of you before I had the happiness of being personally convinced how true and unexaggerated were his sentiments."

"Oh!" cried Mrs. Green, with an arch laugh, "you are acquainted with Monsieur Margot then?"

"I have that honour," said I. "I receive from him every morning lessons both in love and languages. He is perfect master of both."

Mrs. Green burst out laughing.

"*Ah, le pauvre professeur!*" cried she. "He is *too* absurd!"

"He tells me," said I, gravely, "that he is quite *accablé* with his *bonnes fortunes,*—possibly he flatters himself that even you are not perfectly inaccessible to his addresses."

"Tell me, Mr. Pelham," said the fair Mrs. Green, "can you pass by this street about half-past twelve to-night?"

"I will make a point of doing so," replied I, not a little surprised by the question.

"Do," said she; "and now let us talk of old England."

When we went away I told Vincent of my appointment.

"What," said he, "eclipse Monsieur Margot? Impossible!"

"You are right," replied I, "nor is it my hope; there is some trick afloat of which we may as well be spectators."

"With all my heart," answered Vincent; "let us go till then to the Duchesse de G——." I assented, and we drove to the Rue de ——.

The Duchesse de G—— was a fine relic of the *ancien régime,*—tall and stately, with her own gray hair *crêpé,* and surmounted by a high cap of the most dazzling *blonde.* She had been one of the earliest emigrants, and had stayed for many months with my mother, whom she professed to rank amongst her dearest friends. The duchesse possessed to perfection that singular *mélange* of ostentation and ignorance which was so peculiar to the ante-revolutionists. She would talk of the last tragedy with the emphatic tone of a connoisseur in the same breath that she would ask, with Marie Antoinette, why the poor people were so clamorous for *bread,* when they might buy such nice cakes for twopence a piece. "To give you an

idea of the Irish," said she one day to an inquisitive marquis, "know that they *prefer* potatoes to mutton!"

Her *soirées* were among the most agreeable at Paris; she united all the rank and talent to be found in the ultra party, for she professed to be quite a female Mecænas; and whether it was a mathematician or a romance-writer, a naturalist or a poet, she held open house for all, and conversed with each with equal fluency and self-satisfaction.

A new play had just been acted, and the conversation, after a few preliminary *hoverings*, settled upon it.

"You see," said the duchesse, "that *we* have actors, *you* authors. Of what avail is it that you boast of a Shakspeare, since your *Liseton*, great as he is, cannot be compared with our Talma?"

"And yet," said I, preserving my gravity with a pertinacity which nearly made Vincent and the rest of our compatriots assembled lose theirs, "Madame must allow that there is a striking resemblance in their persons and the sublimity of their acting?"

"Pour ça, j'en conviens," replied this *critique de l'École des Femmes*. "Mais cependant Liseton n'a pas la nature, l'âme, la grandeur de Talma!"[1]

"And will you then allow us *no* actors of merit?" asked Vincent.

"Mais oui, dans le genre comique. Par exemple, votre bouffe Kean met dix fois plus d'esprit et de drôllerie dans ses rôles que La Porte."[2]

"The impartial and profound judgment of Madame admits of no further discussion on this point," said I. "What does she think of the present state of our dramatic *literature?*"

"Why," replied Madame, "you have many great poets; but when they write for the stage they lose themselves entirely: your Valter Scote's play of Robe Roi is very inferior to his novel of the same name."

[1] "I grant that; but Liston, however, has not the nature, the soul, the grandeur of Talma."

[2] "Yes, in comedy. For instance, your Kean has ten times more vivacity and drollery than La Porte."

"It is a great pity," said I, "that Byron did not turn his 'Childe Harold' into a tragedy: it has so much *energy, action — variety!*"

"Very true," said Madame, with a sigh: "but the tragedy is, after all, only suited to our nation; we alone carry it to perfection."

"Yet," said I, "*Goldoni* wrote a *few* fine *tragedies.*"

"*Eh bien!*" said Madame, "one rose does not constitute a garden!"

And satisfied with this remark, *la femme savante* turned to a celebrated traveller to discuss with him the chance of discovering the North Pole.

There were one or two clever Englishmen present; Vincent and I joined them.

"Have you met the Persian prince yet?" said Sir George Lynton to me; "he is a man of much talent, and great desire of knowledge. He intends to publish his observations on Paris, and I suppose we shall have an admirable supplement to Montesquieu's 'Lettres Persannes'!"

"I wish we had," said Vincent: "there are few better satires on a civilized country than the observations of visitors less polished; while on the contrary the civilized traveller, in describing the manners of the American barbarian, instead of conveying ridicule upon the visited, points the sarcasm on the visitor; and Tacitus could not have thought of a finer or nobler satire on the Roman luxuries than that insinuated by his treatise on the German simplicity."

"What," said Monsieur d'E—— (an intelligent *ci-devant émigré*), "what political writer is *generally* esteemed as your best?"

"It is difficult to say," replied Vincent, "since with so many parties we have many idols; but I think I might venture to name Bolingbroke as *among* the most popular. Perhaps, indeed, it would be difficult to select a name more frequently quoted and discussed than his; and yet his political works are not very valuable from political knowledge: they contain many lofty sentiments, and many beautiful yet scattered truths; but they were written when legislation, most debated,

was least understood, and ought to be admired rather as excellent for the day than admirable in themselves. The life of Bolingbroke would convey a juster moral than all his writings; and the author who gives us a full and impartial memoir of that extraordinary man, will have afforded both to the philosophical and political literature of England one of its greatest desiderata."

"It seems to me," said Monsieur d'E——, "that your national literature is peculiarly deficient in biography; am I right in my opinion?"

"Indubitably!" said Vincent; "we have not a single work that can be considered a model in biography (excepting, *perhaps*, Middleton's 'Life of Cicero'). This brings on a remark I have often made in distinguishing your philosophy from ours. It seems to me that you, who excel so admirably in biography, memoirs, comedy, satirical observation on peculiar classes, and pointed aphorisms, are fonder of considering man in his relation to society and the active commerce of the world than in the more abstracted and metaphysical operations of the mind. *Our* writers, on the contrary, love to indulge rather in abstruse speculations on their species,—to regard man in an abstract and isolated point of view, and to see him *think* alone in his chamber, while you prefer beholding him *act* with the multitude in the world."

"It must be allowed," said Monsieur d'E——, "that, if this be true, our philosophy is the most useful, though yours may be the most profound."

Vincent did not reply.

"Yet," said Sir George Lynton, "there will be a disadvantage attending your writings of this description, which, by diminishing their general *applicability*, diminish their general *utility*. Works which treat upon man in his relation to society can only be strictly applicable so long as that relation to society treated upon continues. For instance, the play which satirizes a particular class, however deep its reflections and accurate its knowledge upon the subject satirized, must necessarily be obsolete when the class itself has become so. The political pamphlet, admirable for one state, may be ab-

surd in another; the novel which exactly delineates the present age may seem strange and unfamiliar to the next; and thus works which treat of men relatively, and not man *in se*, must often confine their popularity to the age and even the country in which they were written. While, on the other hand, the work which treats of man himself, which seizes, discovers, analyzes the human mind, as it is, whether in the ancient or the modern, the savage or the European, must evidently be applicable, and consequently useful, to all times and all nations. He who discovers the circulation of the blood or the origin of ideas, must be a philosopher to every people who have veins or ideas; but he who even most successfully delineates the manners of one country, or the actions of one individual, is only the philosopher of a single country or a single age. If, Monsieur d'E——, you will condescend to consider this, you will see perhaps that the philosophy which treats of man in his relations is *not* so useful, because neither so permanent nor so invariable, as that which treats of man in himself." [1]

I was now somewhat weary of this conversation, and though it was not yet twelve, I seized upon my appointment as an excuse to depart; accordingly I rose for that purpose. "I suppose," said I to Vincent, "that you will not leave your discussion."

"Pardon me," said he, "amusement is quite as profitable to a man of sense as metaphysics. *Allons.*"

[1] Yet Hume holds the contrary opinion to this, and considers a good comedy more durable than a system of philosophy. Hume is right, if by a system of philosophy is understood a pile of guesses, false but plausible, set up by one age to be destroyed by the next. Ingenuity cannot rescue error from oblivion; but the moment Wisdom has discovered Truth, she has obtained immortality. But is Hume right when he suggests that there may come a time when Addison will be read with delight, but Locke be utterly forgotten? For my part, if the two were to be matched for posterity, I think the odds would be in favour of Locke. I very much doubt whether five hundred years hence Addison will be read at all; and I am quite sure that, a thousand years hence, Locke will not be forgotten.

CHAPTER XVII.

I WAS in this terrible situation when the basket stopped — *Oriental Tales* "*History of the Basket.*"

WE took our way to the street in which Madame Laurent resided. Meanwhile suffer me to *get rid of myself*, and to introduce you, dear Reader, to my friend, Monsieur Margot, the whole of whose adventures were subsequently detailed to me by the garrulous Mrs. Green.

At the hour appointed he knocked at the door of my fair countrywoman, and was carefully admitted. He was attired in a dressing-gown of sea-green silk, in which his long, lean, hungry body looked more like a starved pike than anything human.

"Madame," said he, with a solemn air, "I return you my best thanks for the honour you have done me; behold me at your feet!" and so saying, the lean lover gravely knelt down on one knee.

"Rise, sir," said Mrs. Green, "I confess that you have won my heart: but that is not all; you have yet to show that you are worthy of the opinion I have formed of you. It is not, Monsieur Margot, your person that has won me: no! it is your chivalrous and noble sentiments; prove that these are genuine, and you may command all from my admiration."

"In what manner shall I prove it, madame?" said Monsieur Margot, rising, and gracefully drawing his sea-green gown more closely round him.

"By your courage, your devotion, and your gallantry! I ask but one proof; you can give it me on the spot. You remember, monsieur, that in the days of romance a lady threw her glove upon the stage on which a lion was exhibited, and told her lover to pick it up. Monsieur Margot, the trial to which I shall put you will be less severe. Look" (and Mrs.

Green threw open the window), "look, I throw my glove out into the street; descend for it."

"Your commands are my law," said the romantic Margot. "I will go forthwith," and so saying, he went to the door.

"Hold, sir!" said the lady, "it is not by that simple manner that you are to descend; you must go the same way as my glove, *out of the window.*"

"Out of the window, madame!" said Monsieur Margot, with astonished solemnity; "that is impossible, because this apartment is three stories high, and consequently I should be dashed to pieces."

"By no means," answered the dame; "in that corner of the room there is a basket, to which—already foreseeing your determination—I have affixed a rope; by that basket you shall descend. See, monsieur, what expedients a provident love can suggest."

"H—e—m!" said, very slowly, Monsieur Margot, by no means liking the airy voyage imposed upon him; "but the rope may break, or your hand may suffer it to slip."

"Feel the rope," cried the lady, "to satisfy you as to your first doubt; and, as to the second, can you—*can* you imagine that my affections would not make me twice as careful of your person as of my own? Fie! ungrateful Monsieur Margot! fie!"

The melancholy chevalier cast a rueful look at the basket. "Madame," said he, "I own that I am very averse to the plan you propose: suffer me to go downstairs in the ordinary way; your glove can be as easily picked up whether your adorer goes out of the door or the window. It is only, madame, when ordinary means fail that we should have recourse to the extraordinary."

"Begone, sir!" exclaimed Mrs. Green; "begone! I now perceive that your chivalry was only a pretence. Fool that I was to love you as I have done! fool that I was to imagine a hero where I now find a—"

"Pause, madame, I will obey you; my heart is firm; see that the *rope* is!—"

"Gallant Monsieur Margot!" cried the lady; and going to

her dressing-room, she called her woman to her assistance. The rope was of the most unquestionable thickness, the basket of the most capacious dimensions. The former was fastened to a strong hook, and the latter lowered.

"I go, madame," said Monsieur Margot, feeling the rope: "but it really is a most dangerous exploit."

"Go, monsieur! and Saint Louis befriend you."

"Stop!" said Monsieur Margot, "let me fetch my coat: the night is cold, and my dressing-gown thin."

"Nay, nay, my chevalier," returned the dame, "I love you in that gown: it gives you an air of grace and dignity quite enchanting."

"It will give me my death of cold, madame," said Monsieur Margot, earnestly.

"Bah!" said the Englishwoman: "what knight ever feared cold? Besides, you mistake; the night is warm, and you look so handsome in your gown."

"Do I?" said the vain Monsieur Margot, with an iron expression of satisfaction. "If that is the case, I will mind it less; but may I return by the door?"

"Yes," replied the lady; "you see that I do not require too much from your devotion; enter."

"Behold me!" said the French master, inserting his body into the basket, which immediately began to descend.

The hour and the police of course made the street empty; the lady's handkerchief waved in token of encouragement and triumph. When the basket was within five yards of the ground, Mrs. Green cried to her lover, who had hitherto been elevating his serious countenance towards her, in sober, yet gallant sadness,—

"Look, look, monsieur,—straight before you."

The lover turned round, as rapidly as his habits would allow him, and at that instant the window was shut, the light extinguished, and the basket arrested. There stood Monsieur Margot, upright in the basket, and there stopped the basket, motionless in the air!

What were the exact reflections of Monsieur Margot, in that position, I cannot pretend to determine, because he never

favoured me with them; but about an hour afterwards, Vincent and I,—who had been delayed on the road,—strolling up the street, according to our appointment, perceived by the dim lamps some opaque body leaning against the wall of Madame Laurent's house, at about the distance of fifteen feet from the ground.

We hastened our steps towards it; a measured and serious voice, which I well knew, accosted us,—

"For God's sake, gentlemen, procure me assistance. I am the victim of a perfidious woman, and expect every moment to be precipitated to the earth."

"Good heavens!" said I, "surely it is Monsieur Margot whom I hear. What are you doing there?"

"Shivering with cold," answered Monsieur Margot, in a tone tremulously slow.

"But what are you *in?* for I can see nothing but a dark substance."

"I am in a basket," replied Monsieur Margot, "and I should be very much obliged to you to let me out of it."

"Well—indeed," said Vincent,—for *I* was too much engaged in laughing to give a ready reply,—"your *Château-Margot* has but a cool cellar. But there are some things in the world easier said than done. How are we to remove you to a more desirable place?"

"Ah," returned Monsieur Margot, "*how* indeed! There is, to be sure, a ladder in the porter's lodge long enough to deliver me; but then, think of the gibes and jeers of the porter!—it will get wind; I shall be ridiculed, gentlemen; I shall be ridiculed; and, what is worse, I shall lose my pupils."

"My good friend," said I, "you had better lose your pupils than your life; and the daylight will soon come, and then, instead of being ridiculed by the porter, you will be ridiculed by the whole street!"

Monsieur Margot groaned. "Go then, my friend," said he, "procure the ladder! Oh, those she-devils! what *could* make me such a fool!"

Whilst Monsieur Margot was venting his spleen in a scarcely articulate mutter, we repaired to the lodge, knocked up the

porter, communicated the *accident*, and procured the ladder. However, an observant eye had been kept upon our proceedings, and the window above was re-opened, though so silently that I only perceived the action. The porter, a jolly, bluff, hearty-looking fellow, stood grinning below with a lantern, while we set the ladder — which only just reached the basket — against the wall.

The chevalier looked wistfully forth; and then, by the light of the lantern, we had a fair view of his ridiculous figure. His teeth chattered wofully, and the united cold without and anxiety within threw a double sadness and solemnity upon his withered countenance. The night was very windy; and every instant a rapid current seized the unhappy sea-green vesture, whirled it in the air, and threw it, as if in scorn, over the very face of the miserable professor. The constant recurrence of this sportive irreverence of the gales; the high sides of the basket; and the trembling agitation of the inmate, never too agile, — rendered it a work of some time for Monsieur Margot to transfer himself from the basket to the ladder. At length he had fairly got out one thin, shivering leg.

"Thank Heaven!" said the pious professor, — when at that instant the thanksgiving was checked, and, to Monsieur Margot's inexpressible astonishment and dismay, the basket rose five feet from the ladder, leaving its tenant with one leg dangling out, like a flag from a balloon.

The ascent was too rapid to allow Monsieur Margot even time for an exclamation; and it was not till he had had sufficient leisure in his present elevation to perceive all its consequences, that he found words to say, with the most earnest tone of thoughtful lamentation, "One could not have foreseen this! — it is really extremely distressing; would to Heaven that I could get my leg in or my body out!"

While we were yet too convulsed with laughter to make any comment upon the unlooked-for ascent of the luminous Monsieur Margot, the basket descended with such force as to dash the lantern out of the hand of the porter, and to bring the professor so precipitously to the ground that all the bones in his skin rattled audibly.

"*Mon Dieu!*" said he, "I am done for! Be witness how inhumanly I have been murdered."

We pulled him out of the basket, and carried him between us into the porter's lodge. But the woes of Monsieur Margot were not yet at their termination. The room was crowded. There was Madame Laurent; there was the German count, whom the professor was teaching French; there was the French viscount, whom he was teaching German; there were all his fellow lodgers, the ladies whom he had boasted *of*, the men he had boasted *to*. Don Juan, in the infernal regions, could not have met with a more unwelcome set of old acquaintances than Monsieur Margot had the happiness of opening his bewildered eyes upon in the porter's lodge.

"What!" cried they all, "Monsieur Margot, is that you who have been frightening us so? We thought the house was attacked. The Russian general is at this very moment loading his pistols; lucky for you that you did not *choose* to stay longer in that situation. Pray, monsieur, what could induce you to exhibit yourself so, in your dressing-gown too, and the night so cold? Are n't you ashamed of yourself?"

All this, and infinitely more, was levelled against the miserable professor, who stood shivering with cold and fright; and turning his eyes first on one and then on another, as the exclamations circulated round the room.

"I do assure you—" at length he began.

"No, no," cried one, "it is of no use explaining now!"

"*Mais, Messieurs*—" querulously recommenced the unhappy Margot.

"Hold your tongue!" exclaimed Madame Laurent; "you have been disgracing my house."

"*Mais, Madame, écoutez-moi*—"

"No, no," cried the German, "we saw you—we saw you."

"*Mais, Monsieur le Comte*—"

"Fie, fie!" cried the Frenchman.

"*Mais, Monsieur le Vicomte*—"

At this every mouth was open, and, the patience of Monsieur Margot being by this time exhausted, he flew into a violent rage; his tormentors pretended an equal indignation, and at

length he fought his way out of the room, as fast as his shattered bones would allow him, followed by the whole body, screaming and shouting, and scolding and laughing after him.

The next morning passed without my usual lesson from Monsieur Margot; that was natural enough: but when the next day, and the next, rolled on, and brought neither Monsieur Margot nor his excuse, I began to be uneasy for the poor man. Accordingly I sent to Madame Laurent's to inquire after him; judge of my surprise on hearing that he had, early the day after his adventure, left his lodgings with his small possession of books and clothes, leaving only a note to Madame Laurent, inclosing the amount of his debt to her, and that none had since seen or heard of him.

From that day to this I have never once beheld him. The poor professor lost even the little money due to him for his lessons: so true is it, that in a man of Monsieur Margot's temper, even interest is a subordinate passion to vanity!

CHAPTER XVIII.

> It is good to be merry and wise,
> It is good to be honest and true;
> It is good to be off with the old love,
> Before you be on with the new. — *Song.*

One morning, when I was riding to the Bois de Boulogne, — the celebrated place of assignation, — in order to meet Madame d'Anville, I saw a lady on horseback in the most imminent danger of being thrown. Her horse had taken fright at an English tandem, *or its driver*, and was plunging violently; the lady was evidently much frightened, and lost her presence of mind more and more every moment. A man who was with her, and who could scarcely manage his own horse, appeared to be exceedingly desirous, but perfectly un-

able, to assist her; and a great number of people were looking on, doing nothing, and saying, "*Mon Dieu*, how dangerous!"

I have always had a great horror of being a hero in scenes, and a still greater antipathy to "*females in distress.*" However, so great is the effect of sympathy upon the most hardened of us, that I stopped for a few moments, first to look on, and secondly to assist. Just when a moment's delay might have been dangerous, I threw myself off my horse, seized hers with one hand by the rein which she no longer had the strength to hold, and assisted her with the other to dismount. When all the peril was over, monsieur, her companion, managed also to find his legs; and I did not, I confess, wonder at his previous delay, when I discovered that the lady in danger had been his wife. *He* gave me a profusion of thanks, and *she* made them more than complimentary by the glance which accompanied them. Their carriage was in attendance at a short distance behind. The husband went for it; I remained with the lady.

"Mr. Pelham," she said, "I have heard much of you from my friend Madame d'Anville, and have long been anxious for your acquaintance. I did not think I should commence it with so great an obligation."

Flattered by being already known by name, and a subject of previous interest, you may be sure that I tried every method to improve the opportunity I had gained; and when I handed my new acquaintance into her carriage, my pressure of her hand was somewhat more than slightly returned.

"Shall you be at the English ambassador's to-night?" said the lady, as they were about to shut the door of the carriage.

"Certainly, if *you* are to be there," was my answer.

"We shall meet then," said madame, and her look *said more.*

I rode into the *Bois*, and giving my horse to my servant, as I came near Passy, where I was to meet Madame d'Anville, I proceeded thither on foot. I was just in sight of the spot, and indeed of my *inamorata*, when two men passed, talking very earnestly! They did not remark me, but what individual could ever escape *my* notice? The one was Thornton; the

other,—who could he be? Where had I seen that pale and remarkable countenance before? I looked again. I was satisfied that I was mistaken in my first thought; the hair was of a completely different color. "No, no," said I, "it is not he; yet how like!"

I was *distrait* and absent during the whole time I was with Madame d'Anville. The face of Thornton's companion haunted me like a dream; and, to say the truth, there were also moments when the recollection of my new engagement for the evening made me tired with that which I was enjoying the troublesome honour of keeping.

Madame d'Anville was not slow in perceiving the coldness of my behaviour. Though a Frenchwoman, she was rather grieved than resentful.

"You are growing tired of me, my friend," she said; "and when I consider your youth and temptations, I cannot be surprised at it; yet, I own, that this thought gives me much greater pain than I could have supposed."

"Bah! *ma belle amie,*" cried I, "you deceive yourself; I adore you; I shall always adore you: but it's getting very late!"

Madame d'Anville sighed, and we parted. "She is not half so pretty or agreeable as she was," thought I, as I mounted my horse, and remembered my appointment at the ambassador's.

I took unusual pains with my appearance that evening, and drove to the ambassador's hôtel, in the Rue Faubourg St. Honoré, full half an hour earlier than I had ever done before. I had been some time in the rooms without discovering my heroine of the morning. The Duchess of H——n passed by.

"What a wonderfully beautiful woman!" said Mr. Howard de Howard, a lean gentleman, who valued himself on his ancestors, to Mr. Aberton.

"Ay," answered Aberton, "but to my taste, the Duchesse de Perpignan is quite equal to her; do you know *her?*"

"No—yes!" said Mr. Howard de Howard; "that is, not exactly,—not well." An Englishman never owns that he does not know a duchess.

"Hem!" said Mr. Aberton, thrusting his large hand through his lank light hair. "Hem — could one do anything, do you think, in that quarter?"

"I should think *one* might, with a tolerable person!" answered the spectral aristocrat, looking down at a pair of most shadowy supporters.

"Pray," said Aberton, "what do you think of Miss ——? They say she is an heiress."

"Think of her!" said Mr. Howard de Howard, who was as poor as he was thin, "why, I *have* thought of her!"

"They say that fool Pelham makes up to her." Little did Mr. Aberton imagine, when he made this remark, that I was close behind him.

"I should not imagine that was true," said the secretary; "he is so occupied with Madame d'Anville."

"Pooh!" said Aberton, dictatorially, "*she* never had anything to say to him."

"Why are you so sure?" said Mr. Howard de Howard.

"Why — because he never showed any notes from her, nor ever even said he had a *liaison* with her!"

"Ah! that is quite enough!" said Mr. Howard de Howard.

"But is not that the Duchesse de Perpignan?"

Mr. Aberton turned, and so did I: our eyes met; his fell; well they might, after his courteous epithet to my name; however, I had far too good an opinion of myself to care one straw about his; besides, at that moment, I was wholly lost in my surprise and pleasure, in finding that this Duchesse de Perpignan was no other than my acquaintance of the morning. She caught my gaze, and smiled as she bowed. "Now," thought I, as I approached her, "let us see if we cannot eclipse Mr. Aberton."

All love-making is just the same; and, therefore, I shall spare the reader my conversation that evening. When he recollects that it was Henry Pelham who was the gallant, I am persuaded that he will be pretty certain as to the success.

CHAPTER XIX.

> ALEA sequa vorax species certissima furti
> Non contenta bonis, animum quoque perfida mergit; —
> Furca, furax — infamis, iners, furiosa, ruina.[1] — PETRARCH: *Dial.*

I DINED the next day at the Frères Provençaux: an excellent restaurateur's, by the by, where one gets irreproachable *gibier*, and meets few English.[2] After dinner, I strolled into the various gambling-houses, with which the Palais Royal abounds.

In one of these the crowd and heat were so great, that I should immediately have retired if I had not been struck with the intense expression of interest in the countenance of one of the spectators at the *rouge et noir* table. He was a man about forty years of age; his complexion was dark and sallow; the features prominent, and what are generally called handsome: but there was a certain sinister expression in his eyes and mouth, which rendered the effect of his physiognomy rather disagreeable than prepossessing. At a small distance from him, and playing, with an air which, in its carelessness and *nonchalance*, formed a remarkable contrast to the painful anxiety of the man I have just described, sat Mr. Thornton.

At first sight, these two appeared to be the only Englishmen present beside myself: I was more struck by seeing the former in that scene than I was at meeting Thornton there; for there was something distinguished in the mien of the stranger, which suited far worse with the appearance of the place than the air and dress of my *ci-devant* second.

[1] Gaming, that direst felon of the breast,
Steals more than fortune from its wretched thrall,
Spreads o'er the soul the inert devouring pest,
And gnaws, and rots, and taints, and ruins all. — Paraphrase.

[2] Mr. Pelham could not say as much for the Frères Provençaux at present.

"What! another Englishman?" thought I, as I turned round and perceived a thick, rough greatcoat, which could possibly belong to no Continental shoulders. The wearer was standing directly opposite the seat of the swarthy stranger; his hat was slouched over his face; I moved in order to get a clearer view of his countenance. It was the same person I had seen with Thornton that morning. Never to this moment have I forgotten the stern and ferocious expression with which he was gazing upon the keen and agitated features of the gambler opposite. In the eye and lip there was neither pleasure, hatred, nor scorn, in their simple and unalloyed elements; but each seemed blent and mingled into one deadly concentration of evil passions.

This man neither played nor spoke nor moved. He appeared utterly insensible of every feeling in common with those around. There he stood, wrapped in his own dark and inscrutable thoughts, — never, for one instant, taking his looks from the varying countenance which did not observe their gaze, nor altering the withering character of their almost demoniacal expression. I could not tear myself from the spot. I felt chained by some mysterious and undefinable interest; my attention was first diverted into a new channel by a loud exclamation from the dark-visaged gambler at the table: it was the first he had uttered, notwithstanding his anxiety; and from the deep, thrilling tone in which it was expressed, it conveyed a keen sympathy with the overcharged feelings which it burst from.

With a trembling hand, he took from an old purse the few napoleons that were still left there. He set them all at one hazard on the *rouge*. He hung over the table with a dropping lip; his hands were tightly clasped in each other; his nerves seemed strained into the last agony of excitation. I ventured to raise my eyes upon the gaze, which I *felt* must still be upon the gambler,— there it was fixed, and stern as before: but it now conveyed a deeper expression of joy than it had hitherto assumed; yet a joy so malignant and fiendish, that no look of mere anger or hatred could have equally chilled my heart. I dropped my eyes. I redoubled my attention to the cards;

the last two were to be turned up. A moment more! — the fortune was to the *noir*. The stranger had lost! He did not utter a single word. He looked with a vacant eye on the long mace, with which the marker had swept away his last hopes, with his last coin, and then, rising, left the room, and disappeared.

The other Englishman was not long in following him. He uttered a short low laugh, unheard, perhaps, by any one but myself; and, pushing through the atmosphere of *sacrés!* and *mille tonnerres!* which filled that pandemonium, strode quickly to the door. I felt as if a load had been taken from my bosom when he was gone.

CHAPTER XX.

REDDERE personæ scit convenientia cuique.[1] — HORACE: *Ars Poetica.*

I WAS loitering over my breakfast the next morning, and thinking of the last night's scene, when Lord Vincent was announced.

"How fares the gallant Pelham?" said he as he entered the room.

"Why, to say the truth," I replied, "I am rather under the influence of blue devils this morning, and your visit is like a sunbeam in November."

"A bright thought," said Vincent, "and I shall make you a very pretty little poet soon; publish you in a neat octavo, and dedicate you to Lady D——e. Pray, by the by, have you ever read her plays? You know they were only privately printed?"

"No," said I; for, in good truth, had his lordship interrogated me touching any other literary production, I should have esteemed it a part of my present character to return the same answer.

[1] The appropriate justice sorts each shade and hue,
And gives to each the exact proportion due. — Paraphrase.

"No!" repeated Vincent; "permit me to tell you that you must never seem ignorant of any work *not* published. To be admired, one must always know what other people don't; and then one has full liberty to sneer at the value of what other people *do* know. Renounce the threshold of knowledge. There, every new proselyte can meet you. Boast of your acquaintance with the sanctum, and not one in ten thousand can dispute it with you. Have you read Monsieur de C——'s pamphlet?"

"Really," said I, "I have been so busy!"

"*Ah, mon ami!*" cried Vincent, "the greatest sign of an idle man is to complain of being busy. But you have had a loss: the pamphlet is good. C——, by the way, has an extraordinary though not an expanded mind: it is like a citizen's garden near London; a pretty parterre here, and a Chinese pagoda there; an oak-tree in one corner, and a mushroom bed in the other; and above all, a Gothic ruin opposite the bay-window! You may traverse the whole in a stride; it is the four quarters of the globe in a mole-hill. Yet everything is good in its kind; and is neither without elegance nor design in its arrangement."

"What do you think," said I, "of the Baron de ——, the minister of ——?"

"Of him?" replied Vincent—

"'His soul
Still sits at squat, and peeps not from its hole.'

It is dark and bewildered,—full of dim visions of the ancient *régime*,—it is a bat hovering about the cells of an old abbey. Poor, *antique* little soul! but I will say nothing more about it,—

"'For who would be satirical
Upon a thing so very small'

as the soul of the Baron de ——!"

Finding Lord Vincent so disposed to the biting mood, I immediately directed his *rabies* towards Mr. Aberton.

"Aberton," said Vincent, in answer to my question if he knew that amiable young gentleman,—"yes! a sort of man

who, speaking of the best society, says *we* — who sticks his *best* cards on his chimney-piece, and writes himself *billets-doux* from duchesses. A duodecimo of 'precious conceits,' bound in calf-skin: I know the man well; does he not dress decently, Pelham?"

"His clothes *are* well made," said I, candidly.

"Ah!" said Vincent, "I should think he went to the best tailor, and said, 'Give me a collar like Lord So and So's;' one who would not dare to have a new waistcoat till it had been authoritatively patronized, and who took his fashions, like his follies, from the best proficients. Such fellows are always too ashamed of themselves not to be proud of their clothes; like the Chinese mariners, they burn incense *before the needle!*"

"And Mr. Howard de Howard," said I, laughing, "what do you think of him?"

"What! the thin Eupatrid?" cried Vincent. "He is the mathematical definition of a straight line,—*length without breadth.* His inseparable friend, Mr. Aberton, was running up the Rue St. Honoré yesterday in order to catch him; and when I saw him chasing that meagre apparition, I said to Bennington, 'I have found out the real Peter Schlemil!' 'Whom?' asked his grave lordship, with serious *naïveté.* 'Mr. Aberton,' said I; 'don't you see him *running after his shadow?*' But the pride of the lean thing is so amusing! He is fifteenth cousin to the duke, and so his favorite exordium is, 'Whenever I succeed to the titles of my ancestors.' It was but the other day that he heard two or three silly young men discussing church and state, and they began by talking irreligion,—Mr. Howard de Howard is too unsubstantial not to be spiritually inclined,—however he only fidgeted in his chair. Then they proceeded to be exceedingly disloyal. Mr. Howard de Howard fidgeted again. They then passed to vituperations on the aristocracy; this the attenuated pomposity (*magni nominis umbra*) could brook no longer. He rose up, cast a severe look on the abashed youths, and thus addressed them,—'Gentlemen, I have sat by in silence, and heard my king derided, and my God blasphemed; but now, when you attack the aris-

tocracy, I can no longer refrain from noticing so obviously intentional an insult. *You have become personal.*'"

"Pray, Vincent," said I, after a short pause, "did you ever meet with a Mr. Thornton at Paris?"

"Thornton, Thornton," said Vincent, musingly; "what, Tom Thornton?"

"I should think very likely," I replied; "just the sort of man who would be Tom Thornton,—has a broad face, with a colour, and wears a spotted neckcloth; Tom—what could his name be but Tom?"

"Is he about five-and-thirty?" asked Vincent, "rather short, and with reddish-coloured hair and whiskers?"

"Precisely," said I; "are not all Toms alike?"

"Ah," said Vincent, "I know him well: he is a clever, shrewd fellow, but a most unmitigated rascal. He is the son of a steward in Lancashire, and received an attorney's education; but being a humorous, noisy fellow, he became a great favorite with his father's employer, who was a sort of Mecænas to cudgel-players, boxers, and horse-jockeys. At his house, Thornton met many persons of rank, but of a taste similar to their host's; and they, mistaking his vulgar coarseness for honesty, and his quaint proverbs for wit, admitted him into their society. It was with one of them that I have seen him. I believe of late that his character has been of a very indifferent odour; and whatever has brought him among the English at Paris,—those whitewashed abominations, those 'innocent blacknesses,' as Charles Lamb calls chimney-sweepers,—it does not argue well for his professional occupations. I should think, however, that he manages to *live* here; for wherever there are English fools, there are fine pickings for an English rogue."

"Ay," said I, "but are there enough fools here to feed the rogues?"

"Yes, because rogues are like spiders, and eat each other, when there is nothing else to catch; and Tom Thornton is safe, as long as the ordinary law of nature lasts, that the greater knave preys on the lesser,—for there cannot possibly be a greater knave than he is. If you have made his acquaint-

ance, my dear Pelham, I advise you most soberly to look to yourself; for if he doth not steal, beg, or borrow of you, Mr. Howard de Howard will grow fat, and even Mr. Aberton cease to be a fool. And now, most noble Pelham, farewell. *Il est plus aisé d'être sage pour les autres que de l'être pour soi-même.*"[1]

CHAPTER XXI.

> THIS is a notable couple, and have met
> But for some secret knavery. — *The Tanner of Tyburn.*

I HAD now been several weeks in Paris, and I was not altogether dissatisfied with the manner in which they had been spent. I had enjoyed myself to the utmost, while I had, as much as possible, combined profit with pleasure: namely, if I went to the Opera in the evening, I learned to dance in the morning; if I drove to a *soirée* at the Duchesse de Perpignan's, it was not till I had fenced an hour at the *Salon des Assaults d'Armes;* in short, I took the greatest pains to complete my education. I wish all young men who frequented the Continent for that purpose could say the same!

One day — about a week after the conversation with Vincent recorded in my last chapter — I was walking slowly along one of the paths in the Jardin des Plantes, meditating upon the various excellences of the Rocher de Cancale and the Duchesse de Perpignan, when I perceived a tall man, with a thick, rough coat, of a dark color, — which I recognized long before I did the face of the wearer, — emerging from an intersecting path. He stopped a few moments, and looked round as if expecting some one. Presently a woman, apparently about thirty, and meanly dressed, appeared in an opposite direction. She approached him; they exchanged a few words, and then, the woman taking his arm, they struck into another path,

[1] "It is more easy to be wise for others than for one's self."

and were soon out of sight. I suppose that the reader has already discovered that this man was Thornton's companion in the Bois de Boulogne, and the hero of the gaming house in the Palais Royal. I could not have supposed that so noble a countenance, even in its frowns, could ever have wasted its smiles upon a mistress of the low station to which the woman who had met him evidently belonged. However, we all have our little foibles, as the Frenchman said when he boiled his grandmother's head in a pipkin.

I myself was, at that time, the sort of person that is always taken by a pretty face, however coarse may be the garments which set it off; and although I cannot say that I ever stooped so far as to become amorous of a chambermaid, yet I could be tolerably lenient to any man under thirty who did. As a proof of this gentleness of disposition, ten minutes after I had witnessed so unsuitable a *rencontre*, I found myself following a pretty little *grisette* into a small sort of *cabaret*, which was, at the time I speak of, and most probably still is, in the midst of the gardens. I sat down, and called for my favourite drink of lemonade; the little *grisette*, who was with an old woman, possibly her mother, and *un beau gros garçon*, probably her lover, sat opposite, and began, with all the ineffable coquetries of her country, to divide her attention between the said *garçon* and myself. Poor fellow, he seemed to be very little pleased by the significant glances exchanged over his right shoulder, and at last, under pretence of screening her from the draught of the open window, placed himself exactly between us. This, however ingenious, did not at all answer his expectations; for he had not sufficiently taken into consideration that *I* also was endowed with the power of locomotion; accordingly I shifted my chair about three feet, and entirely defeated the counter-march of the enemy.

But this flirtation did not last long; the youth and the old woman appeared very much of the same opinion as to its impropriety, and accordingly, like experienced generals, resolved to conquer by a retreat; they drank up their *orgeat*, paid for it, placed the wavering regiment in the middle, and quitted the field. I was not, however, of a disposition to break my

heart at such an occurrence, and I remained by the window, drinking my lemonade, and muttering to myself, "After all, women are a bore!"

On the outside of the *cabaret*, and just under my window, was a bench, which, for a certain number of *sous*, one might appropriate to the entire and unparticipated use of one's self and party. An old woman (so at least I supposed by her voice, for I did not give myself the trouble of looking,—though, indeed, as to that matter, it might have been the shrill treble of Mr. Howard de Howard!) had been hitherto engrossing this settlement with some gallant or other. In Paris, no woman is too old to get an *amant*, either by love or money. This couple soon paired off, and was immediately succeeded by another. The first tones of the man's voice, low as they were, made me start from my seat. I cast one quick glance before I resumed it. The new pair were the Englishman I had before noted in the garden, and the female companion who had joined him.

"Two hundred pounds, you say?" muttered the man; "we must have it all."

"But," returned the woman, in the same whispered voice, "he says, that he will never touch another card."

The man laughed. "Fool," said he, "the passions are not so easily quelled; how many days is it since he had this remittance from England?"

"About three," replied the woman.

"And is it absolutely the very last remnant of his property?"

"The last."

"I am then to understand that when this is spent there is nothing between him and beggary?"

"Nothing," said the woman, with a half-sigh.

The man laughed again, and then rejoined in an altered tone, "Then, then will this parching thirst be quenched at last. I tell you, woman, that it is many months since I have known a day — night — hour, in which my life has been as the life of other men. My whole soul has been melted down into one burning, burning thought. Feel this hand,—ay, you may

well start, — but what is the fever of the frame to that within ?"

Here the voice sank so low as to be inaudible. The woman seemed as if endeavouring to soothe him; at length she said, —

"But poor Tyrrell, — you will not, surely, suffer him to starve, to die of actual want, abandoned and alone ?"

"Alone ! no !" cried her companion, fiercely. "When the last agonies shall be upon that man; when, sick with weariness, pain, disease, hunger, he lies down to die; when the death-gurgle is in the throat, and the eye swims beneath the last dull film ; when remembrance peoples the chamber with hell, and his cowardice would falter forth its dastard recantation to Heaven, — *then — may I be there !*"

There was a long pause, only broken by the woman's sobs, which she appeared endeavouring to stifle. At last the man rose, and in a tone so soft that it seemed literally like music, addressed her in the most endearing terms. She soon yielded to their persuasion, and replied to them with interest.

"Spite of the stings of my remorse," she said, "as long as I lose not you, I will lose life, honour, hope, even soul itself !"

They both quitted the spot as she said this.

CHAPTER XXII.

> At length the treacherous snare was laid,
> Poor Pug was caught — to town conveyed;
> There sold. How envied was his doom,
> Made captive in a lady's room ! — *Gay's Fables.*

I was sitting alone a morning or two after this adventure, when Bedos, entering, announced *une dame.*

This *dame* was a fine tall thing, dressed out like a print in the *Magasin des Modes.* She sat herself down, threw up her veil, and, after a momentary pause, asked me if I liked my apartment.

"Very much," said I, somewhat surprised at the nature of the interrogatory.

"Perhaps you would wish it altered in some way?" rejoined the lady.

"*Non — mille remercîmens!*" said I; "you are very good to be so interested in my accommodation."

"Those curtains might be better arranged,— that sofa replaced with a more elegant one," continued my new superintendent.

"Really," said I, "I am too, too much flattered. Perhaps you would like to have my rooms altogether; if so, make at least no scruple of saying it."

"Oh, no," replied the lady, "I have no objection to your staying here."

"You are too kind," said I, with a low bow.

There was a pause of some moments; I took advantage of it.

"I think, madame, I have the honor of speaking to — to — to —"

"The mistress of the hôtel," said the lady, quietly. "I merely called to ask you how you did, and hope you were well accommodated."

"Rather late, considering I have been six weeks in the house," thought I, revolving in my mind various reports I had heard of my present visitor's disposition to gallantry. However, seeing it was all over with me, I resigned myself, with the patience of a martyr, to the fate that I foresaw. I rose, approached her chair, took her hand (very hard and thin it was too), and thanked her with a most affectionate squeeze.

"I have seen much English!" said the lady, for the first time speaking in our language.

"Ah!" said I, giving another squeeze.

"You are a handsome *garçon*," renewed the lady.

"I am so," I replied.

At that moment Bedos entered, and whispered that Madame d'Anville was in the anteroom.

"Good heavens!" said I, knowing her jealousy of disposition, "what is to be done? Oblige me, madame," seizing the

unfortunate mistress of the hôtel, and opening the door to the back entrance — "there," said I, "you can easily escape. *Bon jour.*"

Hardly had I closed the door, and put the key in my pocket, before Madame d'Anville entered.

"Is it by your order that your servant keeps me waiting in your anteroom?" said she, haughtily.

I endeavoured to make my peace: but all my complaisance was in vain; she was jealous of my intimacy with the Duchesse de Perpignan, and glad of any excuse to vent her pique. Fortunately, however, she was going to the Luxembourg; and my only chance of soothing her anger was to accompany her.

Downstairs, therefore, we went, and drove to the Luxembourg; I gave Bedos, before my departure, various little commissions, and told him he need not be at home till the evening. Long before the expiration of an hour, Madame d'Anville's ill-humour had given me an excuse for affecting it myself. Tired to death of her, and panting for release, I took a high tone, — complained of her ill-temper, and her want of love, — spoke rapidly, — waited for no reply, and, leaving her at the Luxembourg, proceeded forthwith to Galignani's like a man just delivered from a strait-waistcoat.

Leave me now, for a few minutes, in the reading-room at Galignani's, and return to the mistress of the hôtel, whom I had so unceremoniously thrust out of my *salon*. The passage into which she had been put communicated by one door with my rooms and by another with the staircase. Now, it so happened, that Bedos was in the habit of locking the latter door, and keeping the key; the other egress, it will be remembered, I myself had secured; so that the unfortunate mistress of the hôtel was no sooner turned into this passage, than she found herself in a sort of dungeon, ten feet by five, and surrounded, like Eve in Paradise, by a whole creation, — not of birds, beasts, and fishes, but of brooms, brushes, linen for the laundress, and — a wood basket! What she was to do in this dilemma was utterly inconceivable; scream, indeed, she might, but then the shame and ridicule of being discovered in so equivocal a situation were somewhat more than our discreet

landlady could endure. Besides, such an *exposé* might be attended with a loss the good woman valued more than reputation, namely, lodgers; for the possessors of the two best floors were both Englishwomen of a certain rank; and my landlady had heard such accounts of our national virtue that she feared an instantaneous emigration of such inveterate prudes, if her screams and situation reached their ears.

Quietly then, and soberly, did the good lady sit, eying the brooms and brushes as they grew darker and darker with the approach of the evening, and consoling herself with the certainty that her release must eventually take place.

Meanwhile, to return to myself, I found Lord Vincent at Galignani's carefully looking over "Choice Extracts from the best English Authors."

"Ah, my good fellow!" said he, "I am delighted to see you: I made such a capital quotation just now; the young Benningtons were drowning a poor devil of a puppy; the youngest (to whom the mother belonged) looked on with a grave, earnest face, till the last kick was over, and then burst into tears. 'Why do you cry so?' said I. 'Because it was so cruel in us to drown the poor puppy!' replied the juvenile Philocunos. 'Pooh!' said I: 'Quid juvat errores *mersa jam puppe* fateri?' Was it not good?—you remember it in Claudian, eh, Pelham? Think of its being thrown away on those Latinless young lubbers! Have you seen anything of Mr. Thornton lately?"

"No," said I, "I 've not; but I am determined to have that pleasure soon."

"You will do as you please," said Vincent; "but you will be like the child playing with edged tools."

"I am not a child," said I, "so the simile is not good. He must be the devil himself, or a Scotchman at least, to take *me* in."

Vincent shook his head. "Come and dine with me at the Rocher," said he; "we are a party of six—choice spirits all."

"*Volontiers;* but we can stroll in the Tuileries first, if you have no other engagement."

"None," said Vincent, putting his arm in mine.

After an hour's walk, Vincent suddenly recollected that he had a commission of a very important nature in the Rue J. J. Rousseau. This was — to *buy a monkey*. "It is for Wormwood," said he, "who has written me a long letter, describing its qualities and qualifications. I suppose he wants it for some practical joke,— some embodied bitterness,— Heaven forbid I should thwart him in so charitable a design!"

"Amen," said I; and we proceeded together to the monkey-fancier. After much deliberation, we at last decided upon the most hideous animal I ever beheld; it was of a — no, I will not attempt to describe it; it would be quite impossible! Vincent was so delighted with our choice, that he insisted upon carrying it away immediately.

"Is it quite quiet?" I asked.

"Comme un oiseau," said the man.

We called a *fiacre*, paid for Monsieur Jocko, and drove to Vincent's apartments; there we found, however, that his valet had gone out and taken the key.

"Hang it," said Vincent, "it does not signify! We 'll carry *le petit monsieur* with us to the Rocher."

Accordingly we all *three* once more entered the *fiacre*, and drove to the celebrated restaurateur's of the Rue Mont Orgueil. O blissful recollections of that dinner! how at this moment you crowd upon my delighted remembrance! Lonely and sorrowful as I now sit, digesting with many a throe the iron thews of a British beefsteak — *more Anglico* — immeasurably tough, I see the grateful apparitions of *escallopes de saumon* and *laitances de carpes* rise in a gentle vapour before my eyes! breathing a sweet and pleasant odour, and contrasting the dream-like delicacies of their hue and aspect with the dire and dure realities which now weigh so heavily on the region below my heart! And thou, most beautiful of all, thou evening star of *entremets*, thou that delightest in truffles and gloriest in a dark cloud of sauces,— exquisite *foie gras!* — have I forgotten thee? Do I not, on the contrary, see thee, smell thee, taste thee, and almost die with rapture of thy possession? What though the goose, of which thou art a part, has indeed been roasted alive by a slow fire, in order to increase

thy divine proportions; yet has not our *Almanach*, the "Almanach des Gourmands" truly declared that the goose rejoiced amid all her tortures, because of the glory that awaited her? Did she not, in prophetic vision, behold her enlarged and ennobled *foie* dilate into *pâtés* and steam into *sautés*,—the companion of truffles, the glory of dishes,—the delight, the treasure, the transport of gourmands! Oh, exalted among birds, apotheosized goose, did not thy heart exult even when thy liver parched and swelled within thee, from that most agonizing death; and didst thou not, like the Indian at the stake, triumph in the very torments which alone could render thee illustrious?

After dinner we grew exceedingly merry. Vincent punned and quoted; we laughed and applauded; and our Burgundy went round with an alacrity to which every new joke gave an additional impetus. Monsieur Jocko was by no means the dullest in the party; he cracked his nuts with as much grace as we did our jests, and grinned and chatted as facetiously as the best of us. After coffee we were all so pleased with one another, that we resolved not to separate, and accordingly we adjourned to my rooms, Jocko and all, to find new revelries and grow brilliant over Curaçoa punch.

We entered my *salon* with a roar, and set Bedos to work at the punch forthwith. Bedos, that Ganymede of a valet, had himself but just arrived, and was unlocking the door as we entered. We soon blew up a glorious fire and our spirits brightened in proportion. Monsieur Jocko sat on Vincent's knee,—"*Ne* monstrum," as he classically termed it. One of our *compotatores* was playing with it. Jocko grew suddenly in earnest,—a grin, a scratch, and a bite, were the work of a moment.

"Ne *quid nimis*—now," said Vincent, gravely, instead of endeavouring to soothe the afflicted party, who grew into a towering passion. Nothing but Jocko's absolute disgrace could indeed have saved his life from the vengeance of the sufferer.

"Whither shall we banish him?" said Vincent.

"Oh," I replied, "put him out in that back passage; the outer door is shut; he 'll be quite safe;" and to the passage he was therefore immediately consigned.

It was in this place, the reader will remember, that the hapless *dame du château* was at that very instant in "durance vile." Unconscious of this fact, I gave Bedos the key, he took the condemned monkey, opened the door, thrust Jocko in, and closed it again. Meanwhile we resumed our merriment.

"*Nunc est bibendum,*" said Vincent, as Bedos placed the punch on the table. "Give us a toast, Dartmore."

Lord Dartmore was a young man, with tremendous spirits, which made up for wit. He was just about to reply, when a loud shriek was heard from Jocko's place of banishment; a sort of scramble ensued, and the next moment the door was thrown violently open, and in rushed the terrified landlady, screaming like a seagull, and bearing Jocko aloft upon her shoulders, from which "bad eminence" he was grinning and chattering with the fury of fifty devils. She ran twice round the room, and then sank on the floor in hysterics, feigned or real. We lost no time in hastening to her assistance; but the warlike Jocko, still sitting upon her, refused to permit one of us to approach. There he sat, turning from side to side, showing his sharp, white teeth, and uttering from time to time the most menacing and diabolical sounds.

"What the deuce shall we do?" cried Dartmore.

"*Do?*" said Vincent, who was convulsed with laughter, and yet endeavouring to speak gravely; "why, watch like L. Opimius, *ne quid respublica detrimenti caperet.*"

"By Jove, Pelham, he will scratch out the lady's *beaux yeux,*" cried the good-natured Dartmore, endeavouring to seize the monkey by the tail, for which he very narrowly escaped with an unmutilated visage. But the man who had before suffered by Jocko's ferocity, and whose breast was still swelling with revenge, was glad of so favourable an opportunity and excuse for wreaking it. He seized the poker, made three strides to Jocko, who set up an ineffable cry of defiance — and with a single blow split the skull of the unhappy monkey in twain. It fell with one convulsion on the ground and gave up the ghost.

We then raised the unfortunate landlady, placed her on the sofa, and Dartmore administered a plentiful potation of the

Curaçoa punch. By slow degrees she revived, gave three most doleful suspirations, and then, starting up, gazed wildly around her. Half of us were still laughing — my unfortunate self among the number; this the enraged landlady no sooner perceived than she imagined herself the victim of some preconcerted villany. Her lips trembled with passion; she uttered the most dreadful imprecations; and had I not retired into a corner, and armed myself with the dead body of Jocko, which I wielded with exceeding valour, she might, with the simple weapons with which Nature had provided her hands, have forever demolished the loves and graces that abide in the face of Henry Pelham.

When at last she saw that nothing hostile was at present to be effected, she drew herself up, and giving Bedos a tremendous box on the ear, as he stood grinning beside her, marched out of the room.

We then again rallied around the table, more than ever disposed to be brilliant, and kept up till daybreak a continued fire of jests upon the heroine of the passage: *cum qua* (as Vincent happily observed) *clauditur adversis innoxia simia fatis*!

CHAPTER XXIII.

SHOW me not thy painted beauties,
These impostures I defy. — GEORGE WITHERS.

The cave of Falri smelt not more delicately; on every side appeared the marks of drunkenness and gluttony. At the upper end of the cave the sorcerer lay extended, etc. — *Mirglip the Persian, in the "Tales of the Genii."*

I WOKE the next morning with an aching head and feverish frame. Ah, those midnight carousals, how glorious they would be if there were *no* next morning! I took my *sauterne* and soda-water in my dressing-room; and, as indisposition always makes me meditative, I thought over all I had done

since my arrival at Paris. I had become (*that*, Heaven knows, I *soon* manage to do) rather a talked-of and noted character. It is true that I was everywhere abused, — one found fault with my neck-cloth, another with my mind, the lank Mr. Aberton declared that I put my hair in papers, and the stuffed Sir Henry Millington said I was a thread-paper myself. One blamed my riding, a second my dancing, a third wondered how any woman *could* like me, and a fourth said that no woman *ever* could.

On one point, however, all — friends and foes — were alike agreed; namely, that I was a consummate puppy, and excessively well satisfied with myself. Perhaps they were not much mistaken there. Why is it, by the by, that to be pleased with one's self is the surest way of offending everybody else? If any one, male or female, an evident admirer of his or her own perfections, enter a room, how perturbed, restless, and unhappy every individual of the offender's sex instantly becomes; for them not only enjoyment, but tranquillity is over, and if they could annihilate the unconscious victim of their spleen, I fully believe no Christian toleration would come in the way of that last extreme of animosity. For a coxcomb there is no mercy, for a coquette no pardon. They are, as it were, the dissenters of society: no crime is too bad to be imputed to them; they do not believe the religion of others; they set up a deity of their own vanity; all the orthodox vanities of others are offended. Then comes the bigotry, the stake, the *auto-da-fé* of scandal. What, alas! is so implacable as the rage of vanity? What so restless as its persecution? Take from a man his fortune, his house, his reputation, but flatter his vanity in each, and he will forgive you. Heap upon him benefits, fill him with blessings: but irritate his self-love, and you have made the very best man ungrateful. He will sting you if he can: you cannot blame him; you yourself have instilled the venom. This is one reason why you must rarely reckon upon gratitude in conferring an obligation. It is a very high mind to which gratitude is not a painful sensation. If you wish to please, you will find it wiser to receive — solicit even — favours than accord

them; for the vanity of the *obliger* is always flattered, that of the *obligee* rarely.

Well, this is an unforeseen digression: let me return! I had mixed, of late, very little with the English. My mother's introductions had procured me the *entrée* of the best French houses; and to them, therefore, my evenings were usually devoted. Alas! that was a happy time, when my carriage used to await me at the door of the Rocher de Cancale, and then whirl me to a succession of visits, varying in their degree and nature as the whim prompted: now to the brilliant *soirées* of Madame de ——, or to the *appartement au troisième* of some less celebrated daughter of dissipation and *écarté;* now to the literary conversaziones of the Duchesse de D——s, or the Vicomte d'——, and then to the feverish excitement of the gambling-house. Passing from each with the appetite for amusement kept alive by variety; finding in none a disappointment, and in every one a welcome; full of the health which supports, and the youth which colours all excess or excitement, I drained, with an unsparing lip, whatever enjoyment that enchanting metropolis could afford.

I have hitherto said but little of the Duchesse de Perpignan; I think it necessary now to give some account of that personage. Ever since the evening I had met her at the ambassador's, I paid her the most unceasing attentions. I soon discovered that she had a curious sort of *liaison* with one of the *attachés,*—a short ill-made gentleman, with high shoulders and a pale face, who wore a blue coat and buff waistcoat, wrote bad verses and thought himself handsome. All Paris said she was excessively enamoured of this youth. As for me, I had not known her four days before I discovered that she could not be excessively enamoured of anything but an oyster *pâté* and Lord Byron's "Corsair." Her mind was the most marvellous *mélange* of sentiment and its opposite. In her amours she was Lucretia herself; in her epicurism Apicius would have yielded to her. She was pleased with sighs, but she adored suppers. She would leave everything for her lover, except her dinner. The *attaché* soon quarrelled with her, and I was installed into the Platonic honours of his office.

At first, I own that I was flattered by her choice, and though she was terribly exacting of my *petits soins*, I managed to keep up her affection, and, what is still more wonderful, my own, for the better part of a month. What then cooled me was the following occurrence: —

I was in her boudoir one evening, when her *femme de chambre* came to tell us that the duc was in the passage. Notwithstanding the innocence of our attachment, the duchesse was in a violent fright; a small door was at the left of the ottoman on which we were sitting. "Oh, no, no, not there!" cried the lady; but I, who saw no other refuge, entered it forthwith, and before she could ferret me out, the duc was in the room.

In the meanwhile, I amused myself by examining the wonders of the new world into which I had so abruptly immerged: on a small table before me was deposited a remarkably-constructed night-cap; I examined it as a curiosity; on each side was placed *une petite côtelette de veau cru*, sewed on with green-colored silk (I remember even the smallest minutiæ); a beautiful golden wig (the duchesse never liked me to play with her hair) was on a block close by, and on another table was a set of teeth, *d'une blancheur éblouissante*. In this manufactory of a beauty I remained for a quarter of an hour; at the end of that time, the abigail (the duchesse had the grace to disappear) released me, and I flew downstairs like a spirit from purgatory.

From that moment the duchesse honoured me with her most deadly abhorrence. Equally silly and wicked, her schemes of revenge were as ludicrous in their execution as remorseless in their design, — at one time I narrowly escaped poison in a cup of coffee, at another she endeavoured to stab me to the heart with a paper-cutter.

Notwithstanding my preservation from these attacks, my fair enemy had resolved on my destruction, and another means of attempting it still remained, which the reader will yet have the pleasure of learning.

Mr. Thornton had called upon me twice, and twice I had returned the visit, but neither of us had been at home to benefit by these reciprocities of politeness. His acquaintance with

my mysterious hero of the gambling-house and the Jardin des Plantes, and the keen interest I took, in spite of myself, in that unaccountable person, whom I was persuaded I had seen before in some very different scene, and under very different circumstances, made me desirous to improve an acquaintance, which, from Vincent's detail, I should otherwise have been anxious to avoid. I therefore resolved to make another attempt to find him at home; and my headache being somewhat better, I took my way to his apartments in the Faubourg St. Germain.

I love that *quartier!*—if ever I go to Paris again I shall reside there. It is a different world from the streets usually known to and tenanted by the English; *there*, indeed, you are among the French, the fossilized remains of the old *régime;* the very houses have an air of desolate yet venerable grandeur; you never pass by the white and modern mansion of a *nouveau riche;* all, even to the ruggedness of the *pavé*, breathes a haughty disdain of innovation; you cross one of the numerous bridges, and you enter into another time,—you are inhaling the atmosphere of a past century; no flaunting *boutique*, French in its trumpery, English in its prices, stares you in the face; no stiff coats and unnatural gaits are seen *anglicizing* up the melancholy streets. Vast hotels, with their gloomy frontals and magnificent contempt of comfort; shops, such as shops might have been in the aristocratic days of Louis Quatorze, ere British contamination made them insolent and dear; public edifices, still eloquent of the superb charities of *le grand monarque;* carriages, with their huge bodies and ample decorations; horses, with their Norman dimensions and undocked honours; men, on whose more high though not less courteous demeanour the Revolution seems to have wrought no democratic plebeianism,—all strike on the mind with a vague and nameless impression of antiquity; a something solemn even in gayety, and faded in pomp, appears to linger over all you behold; there are the Great French People unadulterated by change, unsullied with the commerce of the vagrant and various tribes that throng their mighty mart of enjoyments.

The strangers who fill the *quartiers* on this side the Seine pass not there; between them and *the* Faubourg there is a gulf; the very skies seem different; your own feelings, thoughts, nature itself, alter, when you have passed that Styx which divides the wanderers from the habitants; your spirits are not so much damped as tinged, refined, ennobled by a certain inexpressible awe; you are girt with the stateliness of eld, and you tread the gloomy streets with the dignity of a man who is recalling the splendours of an ancient court where he once did homage.[1]

I arrived at Thornton's chambers in the Rue St. Dominique. "Monsieur, est-il chez lui?" said I to the ancient porteress, who was reading one of Crébillon's novels.

"Oui, monsieur, au quatrième," was the answer. I turned to the dark and unclean staircase, and, after incredible exertion and fatigue, arrived at last at the elevated abode of Mr. Thornton.

"Entrez," cried a voice, in answer to my rap. I obeyed the signal, and found myself in a room of tolerable dimensions and multiplied utilities. A decayed silk curtain of a dingy blue drawn across a recess, separated the *chambre à coucher* from the *salon*. It was at present only half-drawn, and did not, therefore, conceal the mysteries of the den within; the bed was still unmade, and apparently of no very inviting cleanliness; a red handkerchief, that served as a nightcap, hung pendent from the foot of the bed; at a little distance from it, more towards the pillow, were a shawl, a parasol, and an old slipper. On a table which stood between the two dull, filmy windows, were placed a cracked bowl, still reeking with the lees of gin-punch, two bottles half full, a mouldy cheese, and a salad-dish; on the ground beneath the table lay two huge books and a woman's bonnet.

Thornton himself sat by a small consumptive fire, in an easy-chair; another table, still spread with the appliances of breakfast,— namely, a coffee-pot, a milk-jug, two cups, a broken loaf, and an empty dish, mingled with a pack of cards,

[1] It was in 1827 that this was first published; the glory by this time has probably left *the* Faubourg.

one dice, and an open book *de mauvais goût,*—stood immediately before him.

Everything around bore some testimony of low debauchery; and the man himself, with his flushed and sensual countenance, his unwashed hands, and the slovenly rakishness of his whole appearance, made no unfitting representation of the *Genius loci.*

All that I have described, together with a flitting shadow of feminine appearance escaping through another door, my quick eye discovered in the same instant that I made my salutation.

Thornton rose, with an air half-careless and half-abashed, and expressed, in more appropriate terms than his appearance warranted, his pleasurable surprise at seeing me at last. There was, however, a singularity in his conversation which gave it an air both of shrewdness and vulgarity. This was, as may before have been noted, a profuse intermixture of proverbs, some stale, some new, some sensible enough, and all savouring of a vocabulary carefully eschewed by every man of ordinary refinement in conversation.

"I have but a small tenement," said he, smiling; "but, thank Heaven, at Paris a man is not made by his lodgings. Small house, small care. Few *garçons* have indeed a more sumptuous apartment than myself."

"True," said I; "and if I may judge by the bottles on the opposite table, and the bonnet beneath it, you find that no abode is too humble or too exalted for the solace of the senses."

"'Fore Gad, you are in the right, Mr. Pelham," replied Thornton, with a loud, coarse, chuckling laugh, which, more than a year's conversation could have done, let me into the secrets of his character. "I care not a rush for the decorations of the table, so that the cheer be good; nor for the gewgaws of the head-dress, so long as the face is pretty,—'the taste of the kitchen is better than the smell.' Do you go much to Madame B——'s in the Rue Grétry—eh, Mr. Pelham?—ah! I'll be bound you do."

"No," said I, with a loud laugh, but internal shiver; "but

you know where to find *le bon vin et les jolies filles.* As for me, I am still a stranger in Paris, and amuse myself but very indifferently."

Thornton's face brightened. "I tell you what, my good fellow — I beg pardon — I mean Mr. Pelham, I can show you the best sport in the world, if you can only spare me a little of your time, -- this very evening, perhaps?"

"I fear," said I, "I am engaged all the present week; but I long for nothing more than to cultivate an acquaintance seemingly *so exactly to my own taste.*"

Thornton's gray eyes twinkled. "Will you breakfast with me on Saturday?" said he.

"I shall be *too* happy," I replied.

There was now a short pause. I took advantage of it. "I think," said I, "I have seen you once or twice with a tall handsome man in a loose greatcoat of very singular colour. Pray, if not impertinent, who is he? I am sure I have seen him before in England."

I looked full upon Thornton as I said this; he changed colour, and answered my gaze with a quick glance from his small, glittering eye, before he replied, "I scarcely know who you mean, my acquaintance is so large and miscellaneous at Paris. It might have been Johnson, or Smith, or Howard, or anybody, in short."

"It is a man nearly six feet high," said I, "thin, and remarkably well made, of a pale complexion, light eyes, and very black hair, mustachios, and whiskers. I saw him with you once in the Bois de Boulogne, and once in a hell in the Palais Royal. Surely, *now* you will recollect who he is?"

Thornton was evidently disconcerted.

"Oh!" said he, after a short pause, and another of his peculiarly quick, sly glances, "Oh, *that* man; I have known him a very short time. What *is* his name? — let *me* see!" and Mr. Thornton affected to look down in a complete revery of dim remembrances.

I saw, however, that, from time to time, his eye glanced up to me, with a restless, inquisitive expression, and as instantly retired.

"Ah," said I, carelessly, "I think I know who he is."

"Who?" cried Thornton, eagerly, and utterly off his guard.

"And yet," I pursued, without noticing the interruption, "it scarcely can be: the colour of the hair is so very different."

Thornton again appeared to relapse into his recollections.

"War — Warbur — ah! I have it now!" cried he, "Warburton — that's it — that's the name; is it the one you supposed, Mr. Pelham?"

"No," said I, apparently perfectly satisfied. "I was quite mistaken. Good morning, I did not think it was so late. On Saturday, then, Mr. Thornton; *au plaisir!*"

"A cunning dog!" said I to myself, as I left the apartments. "However, *on peut être trop fin.* I shall have him yet."

The surest way to make a dupe is to let your victim suppose you are his.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Voilà de l'érudition.[1] — *Les Femmes Savantes.*

I found, on my return, covered with blood, and foaming with passion, my inestimable valet, — Bedos.

"What's the matter?" said I.

"Matter!" repeated Bedos, in a tone almost inarticulate with rage; and then, rejoicing at the opportunity of unbosoming his wrath, he poured out a vast volley of *ivrognes* and *carognes* against our *dame du château* of monkey reminiscence. With great difficulty, I gathered at last from his vituperations that the enraged landlady, determined to wreak her vengeance on some one, had sent for him into her *appartement,* accosted him with a smile, bade him sit down, regaled him with cool *vol-au-vent* and a glass of Curaçoa, and, while he was felici-

[1] "There 's erudition for you."

tating himself on his good fortune, slipped out of the room; presently three tall fellows entered with sticks.

"We 'll teach you," said the biggest of them, "we 'll teach you to lock up ladies for the indulgence of your vulgar amusement;" and without one other word they fell upon Bedos with incredible zeal and vigour. The valiant valet defended himself, tooth and nail, for some time, for which he only got the more soundly belaboured. In the meanwhile the landlady entered, and, with the same gentle smile as before, begged him to make no ceremony, to proceed with his present amusement, and when he was tired with the exercise hoped he would refresh himself with another glass of Curaçoa.

"It was this," said Bedos, with a whimper, "which hurt me the most, to think that she should serve me so cruelly after I had eaten so plentifully of the *vol-au-vent;* envy and injustice I can bear, but treachery stabs me to the heart."

When these threshers of men were tired, the lady satisfied, and Bedos half dead, they suffered the unhappy valet to withdraw; the mistress of the hôtel giving him a note, which she desired, with great civility, that he would transmit to me on my return. This, I found, inclosed my bill, and informed me that, my month being out on the morrow, she had promised my rooms to a particular friend, and begged I would, therefore, have the *bonté* to choose another apartment.

"Carry my luggage forthwith," said I, "to the Hôtel de Mirabeau;" and that very evening I changed my abode.

I was engaged that day to a literary dinner at the Marquis d'Al——; and, as I knew I should meet Vincent, I felt some pleasure in repairing to my entertainer's hôtel. They were just going to dinner as I entered. A good many English were of the party. The good-natured, in all senses of the word, Lady ——, who always affected to pet me, cried aloud, "Pelham, *mon joli petit mignon,* I have not seen you for an age; do give me your arm."

Madame d'Anville was just before me, and, as I looked at her, I saw that her eyes were full of tears; my heart smote me for my late inattention, and going up to her, I only nodded to Lady ——, and said, in reply to her invitation, "*Non*

perfide, it is *my* turn to be cruel *now*. Remember your flirtation with Mr. Howard de Howard."

"Pooh!" said Lady ——, taking Lord Vincent's arm, "your jealousy does indeed rest upon '*a trifle light as air.*'"

"Do you forgive me?" whispered I to Madame d'Anville as I handed her to the *salle-à-manger*.

"Does not love forgive everything?" was her answer.

"At least," thought I, "it never talks in those pretty phrases."

The conversation soon turned upon books. As for me, I rarely at that time took a share in those discussions; indeed I have long laid it down as a rule, that when your fame, or your notoriety, is once established, you never gain by talking to more than one person at a time. If you don't shine, you are a fool; if you do, you are a bore. You must become either ridiculous or unpopular; either hurt your own self-love by stupidity, or that of others by wit. I therefore sat in silence, looking exceedingly edified, and now and then muttering "Good!" "True!" Thank Heaven, however, the suspension of one faculty only increases the vivacity of the others; my eyes and ears always watch like sentinels over the repose of my lips. Careless and indifferent as I seem to all things, nothing ever escapes me: I have two peculiarities which serve me, it may be, instead of talent,—*I observe and I remember.*

"You have seen Jouy's 'Hermite de la Chaussée d'Antin'?" said our host to Lord Vincent.

"I have, and think meanly of it. There is a perpetual aim at something pointed, which as perpetually merges into something dull. He is like a bad swimmer, strikes out with great force, makes a confounded splash, and never gets a yard the further for it. It is a great effort *not to sink*. Indeed, Monsieur d'A——, your literature is at a very reduced ebb; bombastic in the drama, shallow in philosophy, mawkish in poetry, your writers in the present day seem to think with Boileau,—

"'Souvent de tous nos maux la raison est le pire.'"[1]

[1] "Often of all our ills the worst is reason."

"Surely," cried Madame d'Anville, "you will allow De Lamartine's poetry to be beautiful?"

"I allow it," said he, "to be among the best you have; and I know very few lines in your language equal to the two first stanzas in his 'Meditation on Napoleon,' or to those exquisite verses called 'Le Lac:' but *you* will allow also that he wants originality and nerve. His thoughts are pathetic, but not deep; he whines, but sheds no tears. He has, in his imitation of Lord Byron, reversed the great miracle; instead of turning water into wine, he has turned wine into water. Besides, he is so unpardonably obscure. He thinks, with Bacchus (you remember, D'A——, the line in Euripides, which I will *not* quote) that 'there is something august in the shades:' but he has applied this thought wrongly; in his obscurity there is nothing sublime; it is the background of a Dutch picture. It is only a red herring, or an old hat, which he has invested with such pomposity of shadow and darkness."

"But his verses are so smooth," said Lady ——.

"Ah!" answered Vincent,

> "'Quand la rime enfin se trouve au bout des vers,
> Qu'importe que le reste y soit mis de travers?'"[1]

"*Hélas!*" said the Viscount d'A——, an author of no small celebrity himself; "I agree with you: we shall never again see a Voltaire or a Rousseau."

"There is but little justice in those complaints, often as they are made," replied Vincent. "You may not, it is true, see a Voltaire or a Rousseau; but you will see their equals. Genius can never be exhausted by one individual. In our country, the poets after Chaucer in the fifteenth century complained of the decay of their art; they did not anticipate Shakspeare. In Hayley's time, who ever dreamt of the ascension of Byron? Yet Shakspeare and Byron came like the bridegroom 'in the dead of the night;' and you have the same probability of producing,—not, indeed, another Rousseau, but a writer to do equal honour to your literature."

[1] No matter what the stuff, if good the rhyme:
The rubble stands cemented with the lime.—Paraphrase.

"I think," said Lady ——, "that Rousseau's 'Julie' is overrated. I had heard so much of 'La Nouvelle Héloïse' when I was a girl, and been so often told that it was destruction to read it, that I bought the book the very day after I was married. I own to you that I could not get through it."

"I am not surprised at it," answered Vincent; "but Rousseau is not the less a genius for all that. There is no plot in his novel to bear out the style, and he himself is right when he says, 'This book will suit few readers.' One letter would delight every one: four volumes of them are a surfeit; it is the *toujours perdrix*. But the chief beauty of that wonderful conception of an impassioned and meditative mind is to be found in the inimitable manner in which the thoughts are embodied, and in the tenderness, the truth, the profundity of the thoughts themselves. When Lord Édouard says, 'C'est le chemin des passions qui m'a conduit à la philosophie,'[1] he inculcates, in one simple phrase, a profound and unanswerable truth. It is in these remarks that nature is chiefly found in the writings of Rousseau. Too much engrossed in himself to be deeply skilled in the *characters* of others, that very *self-study* had yet given him a knowledge of the more hidden recesses of the heart. He could perceive at once the motive and the cause of actions, but he wanted the patience to trace the elaborate and winding progress of their effects. He saw the passions in their home, but he could not follow them abroad. He knew *mankind* in the general, but not *men* in the detail. Thus, when he makes an aphorism, or reflection, it comes home at once to you as true; but when he would *analyze* that reflection — when he argues, reasons, and attempts to prove, you reject him as unnatural, or you refute him as false. It is then that he partakes of that *manie commune* which he imputes to other philosophers, 'de nier ce qui est, et d'expliquer ce qui n'est pas.'"[2]

There was a short pause. "I think," said Madame d'Anville, "that it is in those reflections which you admire so much in Rousseau that our authors in general excel."

[1] "It is the path of the passions which has conducted me to philosophy."

[2] "To deny that which is, and explain that which is not."

"You are right," said Vincent; "and, for this reason, with you men of letters are nearly always men of the world. Hence their quick perceptions are devoted to human beings as well as to books. They make observations acutely, and embody them with grace; but it is worth remarking that the same cause which produced the aphorism frequently prevents its being profound. These literary *gens du monde* have the tact to observe, but not the patience, perhaps not the time, to investigate. They make the maxim; but they never explain to you the train of reasoning which led to it. Hence they are more brilliant than true. An English writer will seldom dare to make a maxim, involving perhaps in two lines one of the most important of moral problems, without bringing pages to support his dictum. A French essayist leaves it wholly to itself. He tells you neither how he came by his reasons nor their conclusion: 'Le plus fou souvent est le plus satisfait.'[1] Consequently, if less tedious than the English, your reasoners are more dangerous, and ought rather to be considered as models of terseness than of reflection. A man might learn to *think* sooner from your writers, but he will learn to *think justly* sooner from ours. Many observations of La Bruyère and Rochefoucauld — the latter especially — have obtained credit for truth solely from their point. They possess exactly the same merit as the very sensible, — permit me to add, — very *French* line in Corneille, —

"'Ma plus douce espérance est de perdre l'espoir.'"[2]

The marquis took advantage of the silence which followed Vincent's criticism to rise from table. We all (except Vincent, who took leave) adjourned to the *salon*. "Qui est cet homme là?" said one, "comme il est épris de lui-même!" "How silly he is!" cried another. "How *ugly!*" said a third. "What a taste in literature! such a talker! such shallowness, and such assurance! not worth the answering! could not slip in a word! disagreeable, revolting, awkward, slovenly!" were the most complimentary opinions bestowed upon the un-

[1] "He who has the least sense is the most satisfied."

[2] "My sweetest hoping is to forfeit hope."

fortunate Vincent. The old railed at his *mauvais goût*, and the young at his *mauvais cœur*, for the former always attribute whatever does not correspond with their sentiments to a perversion of taste; and the latter, whatever does not come up to their enthusiasm, to a depravity of heart.

As for me, I went home enriched with two new observations: First, that one may not speak of anything relative to a foreign country as one would if one were a native; national censures become particular affronts. Secondly, that those who know mankind in theory seldom know it in practice; the very wisdom that conceives a rule is accompanied with the abstraction, or the vanity, which destroys it. I mean that the philosopher of the cabinet is often too diffident to put into action his observations or too eager for display to conceal their design. Lord Vincent values himself upon his *science du monde*. He has read much upon men; he has reflected more: he lays down aphorisms to govern or to please them. He goes into society; he is cheated by the one half, and the other half he offends. The sage in the cabinet is but a fool in the *salon;* and the most consummate men of the world are those who have considered the least on it.

CHAPTER XXV.

Falstaff. What money is in my purse?
Page. Seven groats and two pence.—*Second Part of Henry IV.*

En iterum Crispinus!

The next day a note was brought me which had been sent to my former lodgings in the Hôtel de Paris; it was from Thornton:—

My Dear Sir, [it began]—I am very sorry that particular business will prevent me the pleasure of seeing you at my rooms on Saturday. I hope to be more fortunate some other day. I should be glad to introduce you, the first opportunity, to my friends in the Rue Grétry; for I

like obliging my countrymen. I am sure, if you were to go there, you would cut and come again; one shoulder of mutton drives down another.

I beg you to accept my repeated excuses, and remain,

Dear Sir,

Your very obedient servant,

THOMAS THORNTON.

Rue St. Dominique, Friday Morning.

The letter produced in me many and manifold cogitations. What could possibly have induced Mr. Tom Thornton, rogue as he was, to postpone thus, of his own accord, the plucking of a pigeon which he had such good reason to believe he had entrapped? There was evidently no longer the same avidity to cultivate my acquaintance as before; in putting off our appointment with so little ceremony, he did not even fix a day for another meeting. What had altered his original designs towards me? For if Vincent's account were true, it was natural to suppose that he wished to profit by any acquaintance he might form with me, and therefore such an acquaintance his own interest would induce him to continue and confirm.

Either, then, he no longer had the same necessity for a dupe, or he no longer imagined I should become one. Yet neither of these suppositions was probable. It was not likely that he should grow suddenly honest, or suddenly rich: nor had I, on the other hand, given him any reason to suppose I was a jot more wary than any other individual he might have imposed upon. On the contrary, I had appeared to seek his acquaintance with an eagerness which said but little for my knowledge of the world. The more I reflected, the more I should have been puzzled, had I not connected his present backwardness with his acquaintance with the stranger whom he termed Warburton. It is true that I had no reason to suppose so: it was a conjecture wholly unsupported, and, indeed, against my better sense; yet, from some unanalyzed associations, I could not divest myself of the supposition.

"I will soon see," thought I; and wrapping myself in my cloak, for the day was bitterly cold, I bent my way to Thornton's lodgings. I could not explain to myself the deep inter-

est I took in whatever was connected with (the so-called) Warburton, or whatever promised to discover more clearly any particulars respecting him. His behaviour in the gambling-house; his conversation with the woman in the Jardin des Plantes; and the singular circumstance that a man of so very aristocratic an appearance should be connected with Thornton, and only seen in such low scenes, and with such low society,— would not have been sufficient so strongly to occupy my mind, had it not been for certain dim recollections, and undefinable associations, that his appearance when present, and my thoughts of him when absent, perpetually recalled.

As, engrossed with meditations of this nature, I was passing over the Pont Neuf, I perceived the man whom Warburton had so earnestly watched in the gambling-house, and whom my conjectures identified with the "Tyrrell," who had formed the subject of conversation in the Jardin des Plantes, pass slowly before me. There was an appearance of great exhaustion in his swarthy and strongly-marked countenance. He walked carelessly on, neither looking to the right nor the left, with that air of thought and abstraction common to all men in the habit of indulging any engrossing and exciting passion.

We were just on the other side of the Seine, when I perceived the woman of the Jardin des Plantes approach. Tyrrell (for that, I afterwards discovered, was really his name) started as she came near, and asked her, in a tone of some asperity, where she had been. As I was but a few paces behind, I had a clear full view of the woman's countenance. She was about twenty-eight or thirty years of age. Her features were decidedly handsome, though somewhat too sharp and aquiline. Her eyes were light, and rather sunken; and her complexion bespoke somewhat of the paleness and languor of ill-health. On the whole, the expression of her face, though decided, was not unpleasing; and when she returned Tyrrell's rather rude salutation, it was with a smile, which made her, for the moment, absolutely beautiful.

"Where have I been to?" she said, in answer to his inter-

rogatory; "why, I went to look at the New Church, which they told me was so *superbe.*"

"Methinks," replied the man, "that ours are not precisely the circumstances in which such spectacles are amusing."

"Nay, Tyrrell," said the woman, as, taking his arm, they walked on together a few paces before me, "nay, we are quite rich now to what we have been; and, if you *do* play again, our two hundred pounds may swell into a fortune. Your losses have brought you skill, and you may now turn them into actual advantages."

Tyrrell did not reply exactly to these remarks, but appeared as if debating with himself. "Two hundred pounds,—twenty already gone! in a few months all will have melted away. What is it then, now, but a respite from starvation? but with luck it may become a competence."

"And why not have luck? Many a fortune has been made with a worse beginning," said the woman.

"True, Margaret," pursued the gambler, "and even without luck, our fate can only commence a month or two sooner: better a short doom than a lingering torture."

"What think you of trying some new game where you have more experience, or where the chances are greater than in that of *rouge et noir?*" asked the woman. "Could you not make something out of that tall, handsome man, who, Thornton says, is so rich?"

"Ah, if one could!" sighed Tyrrell, wistfully. "Thornton tells me that he has won thousands from him, and that they are mere drops in his income. Thornton is a good, easy, careless fellow, and might let me into a share of the booty; but, then, in what games can I engage him?"

Here I passed this well-suited pair, and lost the remainder of their conversation. "Well," thought I, "if this precious personage does starve at last, he will most richly deserve it, —partly for his designs on the stranger, principally for his opinion of Thornton. If he were a knave only, one might pity him; but a knave and a fool both are a combination of evil for which there is no intermediate purgatory of opinion, —nothing short of utter damnation."

I soon arrived at Mr. Thornton's abode. The same old woman, poring over the same novel of Crébillon, made me the same reply as before; and accordingly again I ascended the obscure and rugged stairs, which seemed to indicate that the road to vice is not so easy as one generally supposes. I knocked at the door, and, receiving no answering acknowledgment, opened it at once. The first thing I saw was the dark, rough coat of Warburton; that person's back was turned to me, and he was talking with some energy to Thornton who lounged idly in a chair, with one ungartered leg thrown over the elbow.

"Ah, Mr. Pelham," exclaimed the latter, starting from his not very graceful position, "it gives me great pleasure to see you. Mr. Warburton, Mr. Pelham; Mr. Pelham, Mr. Warburton."

My new-made and mysterious acquaintance drew himself up to his full height, and bowed very slightly to my own acknowledgment of the introduction. A low person would have thought him rude. I only supposed him ignorant of the world. No man of the world is uncivil. He turned round after this stiff condescension, and sank down on the sofa, with his back towards me.

"I was mistaken," thought I, "when I believed him to be above such associates as Thornton: they are well matched."

"My dear sir," said Thornton, "I am very sorry I could not see you to breakfast; a particular engagement prevented me, —*verbum sap.* Mr. Pelham, you take me, I suppose; black eyes, white skin, and such an ankle!" and the fellow rubbed his great hands and chuckled.

"Well," said I, "I cannot blame you, whatever may be my loss; a dark eye and a straight ankle are powerful excuses. What says Mr. Warburton to them?" and I turned to the object of my interrogatory.

"Really," he answered dryly (but in a voice that struck me as feigned and artificial), and without moving from his uncourteous position, "Mr. Thornton only can judge of the niceties of his peculiar tastes, or the justice of his general excuses."

Mr. Warburton said this in a sarcastic, bitter tone. Thornton bit his lips,—more I should think at the manner than the words, —and his small gray eyes sparkled with a malignant and stern expression, which suited the character of his face far better than the careless levity which his glances usually denoted.

"They are no such great friends after all," thought I; "and now let me change my attack. —Pray," I asked, "among all your numerous acquaintances at Paris, did you ever meet with a Mr. Tyrrell?"

Warburton started from his chair and as instantly reseated himself. Thornton eyed me with one of those peculiar looks which so strongly reminded me of a dog in deliberation whether to bite or run away.

"I do know a Mr. Tyrrell," he said, after a short pause.

"What sort of a person is he?" I asked with an indifferent air; "a great gamester, is he not?"

"He does slap it down on the colours now and then," replied Thornton. "I hope you don't know him, Mr. Pelham!"

"Why?" said I, evading the question. "His character is not affected by a propensity so common; unless, indeed, you suppose him to be more a gambler than a gamester, namely, more acute than unlucky."

"Heaven forbid that I should say any such thing!" replied Thornton; "you won't catch an old lawyer in such imprudence."

"The greater the truth, the greater the libel," said Warburton, with a sneer.

"No," resumed Thornton, "I know nothing against Mr. Tyrrell,—*nothing!* He *may be* a very good man, and I believe he is; but as a friend, Mr. Pelham (and Mr. Thornton grew quite affectionate), I advise you to have as little as possible to do *with that sort of people.*"

"Truly," said I, "you have now excited my curiosity. Nothing, you know, is half so inviting as mystery."

Thornton looked as if he had expected a very different reply, and Warburton said, in an abrupt tone,—

"Whoever enters an unknown road in a fog may easily lose himself."

"True," said I; "but that very chance is more agreeable than a road where one knows every tree! Danger and novelty are more to my taste than safety and sameness. Besides as I rarely gamble myself, I can lose little by an acquaintance with those who do."

Another pause ensued; and, finding I had got all from Mr. Thornton and his uncourteous guest that I was likely to do, I took my hat and my departure.

"I do not know," thought I, "whether I have profited much by this visit. Let me consider. In the first place, I have not ascertained why I was put off by Mr. Thornton; for as to his excuse, it could only have availed one day, and had he been anxious for my acquaintance he would have named another. I have, however, discovered: first, that he does not wish me to form any connection with Tyrrell; secondly, from Warburton's sarcasm, and his glance of reply, that there is but little friendship between those two, whatever be the *intimacy;* and, thirdly, that Warburton, from his *dorsal* positions, so studiously preserved, either wished to be uncivil or unnoticed." The latter, after all, was the most probable supposition; and, upon the whole, I felt more than ever convinced that he was the person I suspected him to be.

CHAPTER XXVI.

> Tell how the fates my giddy course did guide,
> The inconstant turns of every changing hour.
>
> M. Drayton: *Pierce Gaveston.*

> Je me retire donc. — Adieu, Paris, adieu! — Boileau.

When I returned home, I found on my table the following letter from my mother: —

My Dear Henry, — I am rejoiced to hear you are so well entertained at Paris; that you have been so often to the D——s and C——s; that Coulon says you are his best pupil; that your favourite horse is so

much admired; and that you have only exceeded your allowance by £1,000. With some difficulty I have persuaded your uncle to transmit you an order for £1,500, which will, I trust, make up all your deficiencies.

You must not, my dear child, be so extravagant for the future; and for a very good reason, namely, I do not see how you can. Your uncle, I fear, will not again be so generous, and your father cannot assist you. You will therefore see more clearly than ever the necessity of marrying an heiress: there are only two in England (the daughters of gentlemen) worthy of you, — the most deserving of these has £100,000 a year, the other has £10,000. The former is old, ugly, and very ill-tempered: the latter tolerably pretty, and agreeable, and just of age; but you will perceive the impropriety of even thinking of her till we have tried the other. I am going to ask both to my Sunday *soirées*, where I never admit any single men, so that *there*, at least, you will have no rivals.

And now, my dear son, before I enter into a subject of great importance to you, I wish to recall to your mind that pleasure is never an end, but a means; namely, that in your horses and amusements at Paris, your visits and your *liaisons*, you have always, I trust, remembered that these were only so far desirable as the methods of shining in society. I have now a new scene on which you are to enter, with very different objects in view, and where any pleasures you may find have nothing the least in common with those you at present enjoy.

I know that this preface will not frighten you, as it might many silly young men. Your education has been too carefully attended to for you to imagine that any step can be rough or unpleasant which raises you in the world.

To come at once to the point. One of the seats in your uncle's borough of Buyemall is every day expected to be vacated; the present member, Mr. Toolington, cannot possibly live a week, and your uncle is very desirous that you should fill the vacancy which Mr. Toolington's death will create. Though I called it Lord Glenmorris's borough, yet it is not entirely at his disposal, which I think very strange, since my father, who was not half so rich as your uncle, could send two members to Parliament without the least trouble in the world; but I don't understand these matters. Possibly your uncle, poor man, does not manage them well. However, he says no time is to be lost. You are to return immediately to England, and come down to his house in ——shire. It is supposed you will have some contest, but be certain eventually to come in.

You will also, in this visit to Lord Glenmorris, have an excellent

opportunity of securing his affection; you know it is some time since he saw you, and the greater part of his property is unentailed. If you come into the House, you must devote yourself wholly to it, and I have no fear of your succeeding; for I remember, when you were quite a child, how well you spoke, "My name is Norval," and "Romans, countrymen, and lovers," etc. I heard Mr. Canning speak the other day, and I think his voice is quite like yours. In short, I make no doubt of seeing you in the ministry in a very few years.

You see, my dear son, that it is absolutely necessary you should set out immediately. You will call on Lady ——, and you will endeavour to make firm friends of the most desirable among your present acquaintance; so that you may be on the same footing you are now, should you return to Paris. This a little civility will easily do; nobody (as I before observed), except in England, ever loses by politeness; by the by, that last word is one you must never use, it is too *Gloucester Place-like.*

You will also be careful, in returning to England, to make very little use of French phrases; no vulgarity is more unpleasing. I could not help being exceedingly amused by a book written the other day, which professes to give an accurate description of good society. Not knowing what to make us say in English, the author has made us talk nothing but French. I have often wondered what common people think of us, since in their novels they always affect to portray us so different from themselves. I am very much afraid we are in all things exactly like them, except in being more simple and unaffected. The higher the rank, indeed, the less pretence, because there is less to pretend *to.* This is the chief reason why our manners are better than low persons'; ours are more natural, because they imitate no one else; theirs are affected, because they think to imitate ours; and whatever is evidently borrowed becomes vulgar. Original affectation is sometimes good *ton:* imitated affectation, always bad.

Well, my dear Henry, I must now conclude this letter, already too long to be interesting. I hope to see you about ten days after you receive this; and if you can bring me a Cashmere shawl, it would give me great pleasure to see your taste in its choice. God bless you, my dear son.

Your very affectionate,

FRANCES PELHAM.

P. S. I hope you go to church sometimes: I am sorry to see the young men of the present day so irreligious; it is very bad taste! Perhaps you could get my old friend, Madame de ——, to choose the Cashmere; — take care of your health.

This letter, which I read carefully twice over, threw me into a most serious meditation. My first feeling was regret at leaving Paris; my second was a certain exultation at the new prospects so unexpectedly opened to me. The great aim of a philosopher is to reconcile every disadvantage by some counterbalance of good; where he cannot create this, he should imagine it. I began, therefore, to consider less what I should lose than what I should gain by quitting Paris. In the first place, I was tolerably tired of its amusements; no business is half so fatiguing as pleasure. I longed for a change; behold, a change was at hand! Then, to say truth, I was heartily glad of a pretence of escaping from a numerous cohort of *folles amours,* with Madame d'Anville at the head; and the very circumstance which men who play the German flute and fall in love would have considered the most vexatious, I regarded as the most consolatory.

Mv mind being thus relieved from its primary regret at my departure, I now suffered it to look forward to the advantages of my return to England. My love of excitement and variety made an election, in which I was to have both the importance of the contest and the certainty of the success, a very agreeable object of anticipation.

I was also by this time wearied with my attendance upon women, and eager to exchange it for the ordinary objects of ambition to men: and my vanity whispered that my success in the one was no unfavourable omen of my prosperity in the other. On my return to England, with a new scene and a new motive for conduct, I resolved that I would commence a different character from that I had hitherto assumed. How far I kept this resolution the various events hereafter to be shown will testify. For myself, I felt that I was now about to enter a more crowded scene upon a more elevated ascent; and my previous experience of human nature was sufficient to convince me that my safety required a more continual circumspection, and my success a more dignified bearing.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Je noterai cela, madame, dans mon livre. — Molière.

I am not one of those persons who are many days in deciding what may be effected in one. "On the third day from this," said I to Bedos, "at half-past nine in the morning, I shall leave Paris for England."

"Oh, my poor wife!" said the valet; "she will break her heart if I leave her."

"Then stay," said I. Bedos shrugged his shoulders.

"I prefer being with monsieur to all things."

"What, even to your wife?" The courteous rascal placed his hand to his heart and bowed. "You shall not suffer by your fidelity; you shall take your wife with you."

The conjugal valet's countenance fell. "No," he said, "no; he could not take advantage of monsieur's generosity."

"I insist upon it,—not another word."

"I beg a thousand pardons of monsieur; but—but my wife is very ill, and unable to travel."

"Then, in that case, so excellent a husband cannot think of leaving a sick and destitute wife."

"Poverty has no law; if I consulted my heart, and stayed, I should starve, *et il faut vivre.*" [1]

"Je n'en vois pas la nécessité," [2] replied I, as I got into my carriage. That repartee, by the way, I cannot claim as my own: it is the very unanswerable answer of a judge to an expostulating thief.

I made the round of reciprocal regrets, according to the orthodox formula. The Duchesse de Perpignan was the last, —Madame d'Anville I reserved for another day,—that virtuous and wise personage was in the *boudoir* of reception. I glanced at the fatal door as I entered. I have a great aversion, after anything has once happened and fairly subsided,

[1] "One must live." [2] "I don't see the necessity of that."

to make any allusion to its former existence. I never, therefore, talked to the duchesse about our ancient *égarements.* I spoke, this morning, of the marriage of one person, the death of another, and lastly, the departure of my individual self.

"When do you go?" she said eagerly.

"In two days: my departure will be softened, if I can execute any commissions in England for madame."

"None," said she; and then in a low tone (that none of the idlers, who were always found at her morning *levées*, should hear) she added, "you will receive a note from me this evening."

I bowed, changed the conversation, and withdrew. I dined in my own rooms, and spent the evening in looking over the various *billets-doux* received during my *séjour* at Paris.

"Where shall I put all these locks of hair?" asked Bedos, opening a drawer full.

"Into my scrap-book."

"And all these letters?"

"Into the fire."

I was just getting into bed when the Duchesse de Perpignan's note arrived; it was as follows:—

My Dear Friend,—For that word, so doubtful in our language, I may at least call you in *your own.* I am unwilling that you should leave this country with those sentiments you now entertain of me unaltered, yet I cannot imagine any form of words of sufficient magic to change them. Oh! if you knew how much I am to be pitied; if you could look for one moment into this lonely and blighted heart; if you could trace, step by step, the progress I have made in folly and sin, you would see how much of what you now condemn and despise I have owed to circumstances, rather than to the vice of my disposition. I was born a beauty, educated a beauty, owed fame, rank, power to beauty; and it is to the advantages I have derived from person that I owe the ruin of my mind. You have seen how much I now derive from art; I loathe myself as I write that sentence; but no matter: from that moment you loathed me too. You did not take into consideration that I had been living on excitement all my youth, and that in my maturer years I could not relinquish it. I had reigned by my attractions, and I thought every art preferable to resigning my empire: but, in feeding my vanity, I had not been able to stifle the dictates of my heart. Love is so natural to a

woman that she is scarcely a woman who resists it; but in me it has been a sentiment, not a passion.

Sentiment, then, and vanity have been my seducers. I said, that I owed my errors to circumstances, not to nature. You will say, that in confessing love and vanity to be my seducers, I contradict this assertion: you are mistaken. I mean, that though vanity and sentiment were in me, yet the scenes in which I have been placed, and the events which I have witnessed, gave to those latent currents of action a wrong and a dangerous direction. I was formed *to love;* for one whom I did love I could have made every sacrifice. I married a man I hated, and I only learnt the depths of my heart when it was too late.

Enough of this; you will leave this country; we shall never meet again — never! You may return to Paris, but I shall then be no more: *n'importe:* I shall be unchanged to the last. *Je mourrai en reine.*

As a latest pledge of what I have felt for you, I send you the enclosed chain and ring; as a latest favour I request you to wear them for six months, and, above all, for two hours in the Tuileries to-morrow. You will laugh at this request; it seems idle and romantic, — perhaps it is so. Love has many exaggerations in sentiment which reason would despise. What wonder, then, that mine, above that of all others, should conceive them? You will not, I know, deny this request. Farewell! — in this world we shall never meet again. Farewell!

E. P.

"A most sensible effusion," said I to myself, when I had read this billet; "and yet, after all, it shows more feeling and more character than I could have supposed she possessed." I took up the chain: it was of Maltese workmanship; not very handsome, nor, indeed, in any way remarkable, except for a plain hair ring which was attached to it, and which I found myself unable to take off without breaking. "It is a very singular request," thought I, "but then it comes from a very singular person; and as it rather partakes of adventure and intrigue, I shall at all events appear in the Tuileries to-morrow *chained* and *ringed.*"

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THY incivility shall not make me fail to do what becomes me; and since thou hast more valour than courtesy, I for thee will hazard that life which thou wouldst take from me. — *Cassandra, "elegantly done into English by* Sir CHARLES COTTERELL."

ABOUT the usual hour for the promenade in the Tuileries, I conveyed myself thither. I set the chain and ring in full display, rendered still more conspicuous by the dark-colored dress which I always wore. I had not been in the garden ten minutes before I perceived a young Frenchman, scarcely twenty years of age, look with a very peculiar air at my new decorations. He passed and repassed me, much oftener than the alternations of the walk warranted; and at last, taking off his hat, said in a low tone, that he wished much for the honour of exchanging a few words with me in private. I saw, at the first glance, that he was a gentleman, and accordingly withdrew with him among the trees, in the more retired part of the garden.

"Permit me," said he, "to inquire how that ring and chain came into your possession?"

"Monsieur," I replied, "you will understand me, when I say, that the honour of another person is implicated in my concealment of that secret."

"Sir," said the Frenchman, colouring violently, "I have seen them before; in a word, they belong to me!"

I smiled; my young hero fired at this. "*Oui, monsieur,*" said he, speaking very loud, and very quick, "they belong to *me,* and I insist upon your immediately restoring them, or vindicating your claim to them by arms."

"You leave me but one answer, monsieur," said I; "I will find a friend to wait upon you immediately. Allow me to inquire your address." The Frenchman, who was greatly agitated, produced a card. We bowed and separated.

I was glancing over the address I held in my hand, which was — C. de Vautran, Rue de Bourbon, Numéro —— when my ears were saluted with,—

"Now do you know me? —*thou* shouldst be Alonzo."

I did not require the faculty of sight to recognize Lord Vincent. "My dear fellow," said I, "I am rejoiced to see you!" and thereupon I poured into his ear the particulars of my morning adventure. Lord Vincent listened to me with much apparent interest, and spoke very unaffectedly of his readiness to serve me, and his regret at the occasion.

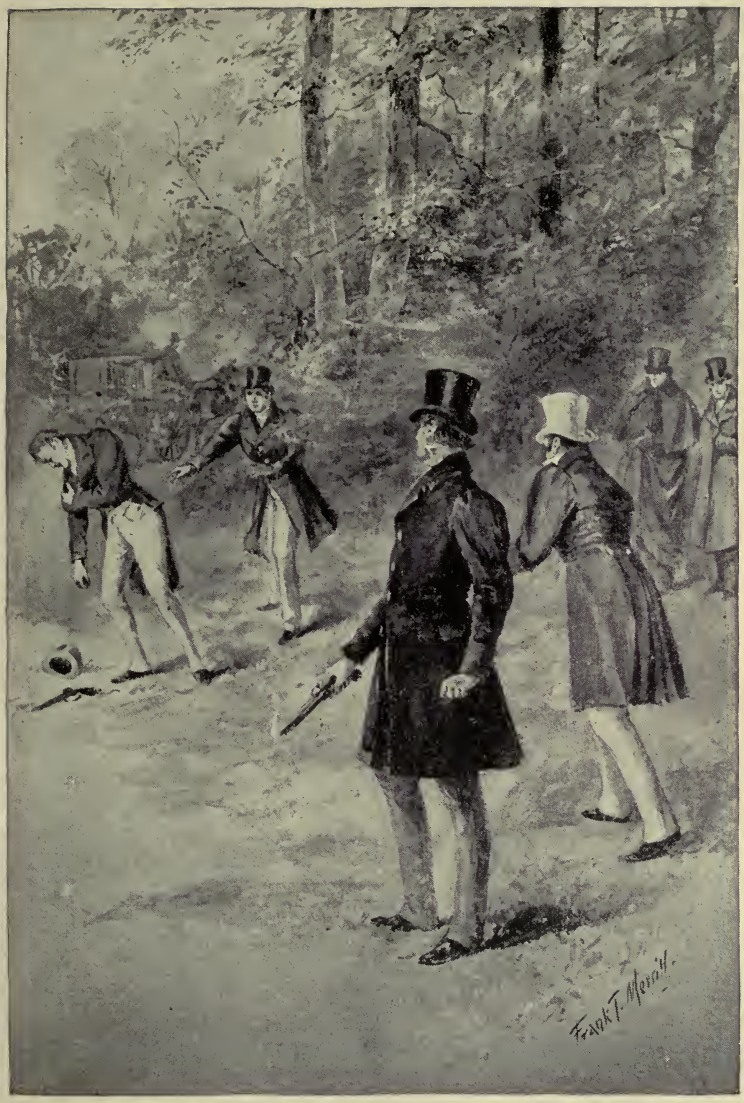
"Pooh!" said I, "a duel in France is not like one in England. The former is a matter of course, a trifle of common occurrence, — one makes an engagement to fight in the same breath as an engagement to dine; but the latter is a thing of state and solemnity,— long faces, early rising, and will-making. But *do* get this business over as soon as you can, that we may dine at the Rocher afterwards."

"Well, my dear Pelham," said Vincent, "I cannot refuse you my services; and as I suppose Monsieur de Vautran will choose swords, I venture to augur everything from your skill in that species of weapon. It is the first time I have ever interfered in affairs of this nature, but I hope to get well through the present.

"'Nobilis ornatur lauro collega *secundo*,'

as Juvenal says. *Au revoir;*" and away went Lord Vincent, half forgetting all his late anxiety for my life in his paternal pleasure for the delivery of his quotation.

Vincent is the only punster I ever knew with a good heart. No action, to that race in general, is so serious an occupation as the play upon words; and the remorseless habit of murdering a phrase renders them perfectly obdurate to the simple death of a friend. I walked through every variety the straight paths of the Tuileries could afford, and was beginning to get exceedingly tired, when Lord Vincent returned. He looked very grave, and I saw at once that he was come to particular-



The Duel in the Bois de Boulogne.

ize the circumstances of the last extreme. "*The Bois de Boulogne — pistols — in one hour,*" were the three leading features of his detail.

"Pistols!" said I; "well, be it so. I would rather have had swords, for the young man's sake as much as my own; but thirteen paces and a steady aim will settle the business as soon. We will try a bottle of the Chambertin to-day, Vincent." The punster smiled faintly, and for once in his life made no reply. We walked gravely and soberly to my lodgings for the pistols, and then proceeded to the engagement as silently as philosophers should do.

The Frenchman and his second were on the ground first. I saw that the former was pale and agitated; not, I think, from fear, but passion. When we took our ground, Vincent came to me, and said, in a low tone, "For Heaven's sake, suffer me to accommodate this, if possible!"

"It is not in *our* power," said I, receiving the pistol. I looked steadily at De Vautran, and took my aim. His pistol, owing, I suppose, to the trembling of his hand, went off a moment sooner than he had anticipated — the ball grazed my hat. My aim was more successful — I struck him in the shoulder — the exact place I had intended. He staggered a few paces, but did not fall.

We hastened towards him; his cheek assumed a still more livid hue as I approached; he muttered some half-formed curses between his teeth, and turned from me to his second.

"You will inquire whether Monsieur de Vautran is satisfied," said I to Vincent, and retired to a short distance.

"His second," said Vincent (after a brief conference with that person), "replies to my question, that Monsieur de Vautran's wound has left him, for the present, no alternative." Upon this answer I took Vincent's arm, and we returned forthwith to my carriage.

"I congratulate you most sincerely on the event of this duel," said Vincent. "Monsieur de M——, De Vautran's second, informed me, when I waited on him, that your antagonist was one of the most celebrated pistol-shots in Paris; and that a lady with whom he had been long in love, made the death of

the chain-bearer the price of her favours. Devilish lucky for you, my good fellow, that his hand trembled so; but I did not know *you* were so good a shot."

"Why," I answered, "I am *not* what is vulgarly termed 'a crack shot:' I cannot split a bullet on a penknife; but I am sure of a target somewhat smaller than a man; and my hand is as certain in the field as it is in the practice-yard."

"Le sentiment de nos forces les augmente,"[1] replied Vincent. "Shall I tell the coachman to drive to the Rocher?"

CHAPTER XXIX.

HERE 's a kind host, that makes the invitation,
To your own cost, to his *fort bonne collation.*
WYCHERLEY: *Genteel Dancing Master.*

Vous pouvez bien juger que je n'aurai pas grande peine à me consoier d'une chose dont je me suis déjà consolé tant de fois. — *Lettres de Boileau.*

As I was walking home with Vincent from the Rue Montorgueil, I saw, on entering the Rue St. Honoré, two figures before us; the tall and noble stature of the one I could not for a moment mistake. They stopped at the door of an hôtel, which opened in that noiseless manner so peculiar to the *conciergerie* of France. I was at the door the moment they had disappeared, but not before I had caught a glance of the dark locks and pale countenance of Warburton,—my eye fell upon the number of the hôtel.

"Surely," said I, "I have been in that house before?"

"Likely enough," growled Vincent, who was gloriously drunk. "It is a house of twofold utility; you may play with cards or coquet with women, which you please."

[1] "The conviction of our forces augments them."

At these words I remembered the hôtel and its inmates immediately. It belonged to an old nobleman, who, though on the brink of the grave, was still grasping at the good things on the margin. He lived with a pretty and clever woman, who bore the name and honours of his wife. They kept up two *salons*, one *pour le petit souper*, and the other *pour le petit jeu*. You saw much *écarté* and more love-making, and lost your heart and your money with equal facility. In a word, the marquis and his *jolie petite femme* were a wise and prosperous couple, who made the best of their lives, and lived decently and honourably upon other people.

"*Allons*, Pelham," cried Vincent, as I was still standing at the door in deliberation; "how much longer will you keep me to congeal in this 'eager and nipping air,' — 'Quamdiu patientiam nostram abutere, Catilina?'"

"Let us enter," said I. "I have the run of the house, and we may find —"

"'Some young vices — some fair iniquities,'" interrupted Vincent with a hiccough, —

> "'Leade on, good fellowe,' quoth Robin Hood,
> 'Leade on, I do bid thee.'"

And with these words, the door opened in obedience to my rap and we mounted to the marquis's tenement *au premier*.

The room was pretty full; the *soi-disante* marquise was flitting from table to table, — betting at each, and coquetting with all; and the marquis himself, with a moist eye and a shaking hand, was affecting the Don Juan with the various Elviras and Annas with which his *salon* was crowded. Vincent was trying to follow me through the crowd, but his confused vision and unsteady footing led him from one entanglement to another, till he was quite unable to proceed. A tall, corpulent Frenchman, six feet by five, was leaning (*a great and weighty objection*) just before him, utterly occupied in the vicissitudes of an *écarté* table, and unconscious of Vincent's repeated efforts, first on one side, and then on the other, to pass him.

At last, the perplexed wit, getting more irascible as he grew more bewildered, suddenly seized the vast incumbrance by the arm, and said to him, in a sharp, querulous tone, "Pray, monsieur, why are you like the lote-tree in Mahomet's seventh heaven?"

"*Sir!*" cried the astonished Frenchman.

"Because," continued Vincent, answering his own enigma, —"because *beyond you there is no passing!*"

The Frenchman, one of that race who always forgive anything for a *bon mot*, smiled, bowed, and drew himself aside. Vincent steered by, and, joining me, hiccoughed out, "Fortiaque adversis opponite pectora rebus."

Meanwhile I had looked round the room for the objects of my pursuit: to my great surprise I could not perceive them; they may be in the other room, thought I, and to the other room I went; the supper was laid out, and an old *bonne* was quietly helping herself to some sweetmeat. All *other* human beings (if, indeed, an old woman can be called a human being!) were, however, invisible, and I remained perfectly bewildered as to the non-appearance of Warburton and his companion. I entered the gaming-room once more,—I looked round in every corner,—I examined every face; but in vain: and, with a feeling of disappointment very disproportioned to my loss, I took Vincent's arm, and we withdrew.

The next morning I spent with Madame d'Anville. A Frenchwoman easily consoles herself for the loss of a lover; she converts him into a friend, and thinks herself (nor is she much deceived) benefited by the exchange. We talked of our grief in maxims, and bade each other adieu in antitheses. Ah! it is a pleasant thing to drink with Alcidonis (in Marmontel's Tale) of the rose-coloured phial; to sport with the fancy, not to brood over the passion of youth. There is a time when the heart, from very tenderness, runs over, and (so much do our virtues as well as vices flow from our passions) there is, perhaps, rather hope than anxiety for the future in that excess. Then, if Pleasure errs, it errs through heedlessness not design; and Love, wandering over flowers, "proffers honey, but bears *not* a sting." Ah! happy time!

in the lines of one who can so well translate feeling into words —

> "Fate has not darkened thee; Hope has not made
> The blossoms expand, it but opens to fade;
> Nothing is known of those wearing fears
> Which will shadow the light of *our* after years."
>
> *The Improvisatrice.*

Pardon this digression,—not much, it must be confessed, in my ordinary strain,—but let me, dear reader, very seriously advise thee not to judge of me yet. When thou hast got to the end of my book, if thou dost condemn it or its hero —why, "I will let thee alone" (as honest Dogberry advises) "till thou art sober; and, if thou make me not, then, the better answer, thou art not the man I took thee for."

CHAPTER XXX.

> It must be confessed, that flattery comes mightily easy to one's mouth in the presence of royalty. — *Letters of Stephen Montague.*
>
> 'T is he. — How came he thence? — what doth he here? — Lara.

I had received for that evening (my last at Paris) an invitation from the Duchesse de B——. I knew that the party was to be small, and that very few besides the royal family would compose it. I had owed the honour of this invitation to my intimacy with the ——s, the great friends of the duchesse, and I promised myself some pleasure in the engagement.

There were but eight or nine persons present when I entered the royal chamber. The most distinguished of these I recognized immediately as the ——. He came forward with much grace as I approached, and expressed his pleasure at seeing me.

"You were presented, I think, about a month ago," added the ——, with a smile of singular fascination; "I remember it well."

I bowed low to this compliment.

"Do you propose staying long at Paris?" the —— continued.

"I protracted," I replied, "my departure solely for the honour this evening affords me. In so doing, please your ——, I have followed the wise maxim of keeping the greatest pleasure to the last."

The royal chevalier bowed to my answer with a smile still sweeter than before, and began a conversation with me which lasted for several minutes. I was struck with the ——'s air and bearing. They possess great dignity, without any affectation of its assumption. He speaks peculiarly good English, and the compliment of addressing me in that language was therefore as judicious as delicate. His observations owed little to his rank; they would have struck you as appropriate, and the air which accompanied them pleased you as graceful, even in a simple individual. Judge, then, if they charmed me in the ——. The upper part of his countenance is prominent and handsome, and his eyes have much softness of expression. His figure is slight and particularly well knit; perhaps he is altogether more adapted to strike in private than with public effect. Upon the whole, he is one of those very few persons of great rank whom you would have had pride in knowing as an equal, and have pleasure in acknowledging as a superior.[1]

As the —— paused, and turned with great courtesy to the Duc de ——, I bowed my way to the Duchesse de B——. That personage, whose liveliness and piquancy of manner always make one wish for one's own sake that her rank was

[1] The sketch of these unfortunate members of an exiled and illustrious family may not be the less interesting from the reverses which, since the first publication of this work, placed the Orleans family on the Bourbon throne. As for the erring Charles X., he was neither a great monarch nor a wise man; but he was, in air, grace, and manner, the most thorough-bred gentleman I ever met. — H. P.

less exalted, was speaking with great volubility to a tall, stupid-looking man, one of the ministers, and smiled most graciously upon me as I drew near. She spoke to me of our national amusements. "You are not," said she, "so fond of dancing as we are."

"We have not the same exalted example to be at once our motive and our model," said I, in allusion to the duchesse's well-known attachment to that accomplishment. The Duchesse d'A—— came up as I said this, and the conversation flowed on evenly enough till the ——'s whist-party was formed. His partner was Madame de la R——, the heroine of La Vendée. She was a tall and very stout woman, singularly lively and entertaining, and appeared to possess both the moral and the physical energy to accomplish feats still more noble than those she performed.

I soon saw that it would not do for me to stay very long. I had already made a favourable impression; and, in such cases, it is my constant rule immediately to retire. Stay, if it be whole hours, until you *have* pleased, but leave the moment *after* your success. A great genius should not linger too long either in the *salon* or the world. He must quit each with *éclat.* In obedience to this rule, I no sooner found that my court had been effectually made than I rose to withdraw.

"You will return soon to Paris?" said the Duchesse de B——.

"I cannot resist it," I replied. "Mon corps reviendra pour chercher mon cœur."

"We shall not forget you," said the duchesse.

"Your royal highness has *now* given me my only inducement *not* to return," I answered, as I bowed out of the room.

It was much too early to go home: at that time I was too young and restless to sleep till long after midnight; and while I was deliberating in what manner to pass the hours, I suddenly recollected the hôtel in the Rue St. Honoré to which Vincent and I had paid so unceremonious a visit the night before. Impressed with the hope that I might be more successful in meeting Warburton than I had been, I ordered the coachman to drive to the abode of the old Marquis ——.

The *salon* was as crowded as usual. I lost a few napoleons at *écarté* in order to pay my *entrée*, and then commenced a desultory flirtation with one of the fair decoys. In this occupation my eye and my mind frequently wandered. I could not divest myself of the hope of once more seeing Warburton before my departure from Paris, and every reflection which confirmed my suspicions of his identity redoubled my interest in his connection with Tyrrell and the vulgar *débauché* of the Rue St. Dominique. I was making some languid reply to my Cynthia of the minute, when my ear was suddenly greeted by an English voice. I looked round, and saw Thornton in close conversation with a man whose back was turned to me, but whom I rightly conjectured to be Tyrrell.

"Oh! he 'll be here soon," said the former, "and we 'll *bleed him* regularly to-night. It is very singular that you who play so much better should not have *floored* him yesterday evening."

Tyrrell replied in a tone so low as to be inaudible, and a minute afterwards the door opened, and Warburton entered. He came up instantly to Thornton and his companion; and, after a few words of ordinary salutation, Warburton said, in one of those modulated but artificial tones so peculiar to himself, "I am sure, Tyrrell, that you must be eager for your revenge. To lose to such a mere tyro as myself is quite enough to double the pain of defeat and the desire of retaliation."

I did not hear Tyrrell's reply, but the trio presently moved towards the door, which till then I had not noticed, and which was probably the entrance to our hostess's *boudoir*. The *soi-disante* marquise opened it herself, for which kind office Thornton gave her a leer and a wink, characteristic of his claims to gallantry. When the door was again closed upon them, I went to the marquise, and, after a few compliments, asked whether the room Messieurs les Anglais had entered was equally open to all guests.

"Why," said she, with a slight hesitation, "those gentlemen play for higher stakes than we usually do here, and one of them is apt to get irritated by the advice and expostula-

tions of the lookers-on; and so after they had played a short time in the *salon* last night, Monsieur Thornton, a very old friend of mine [here the lady looked down], asked me permission to occupy the inner room; and as I knew him so well, I could have no scruple in obliging him."

"Then, I suppose," said I, "that, as a stranger, I have not permission to intrude upon them?"

"Shall I inquire?" answered the marquise.

"No!" said I, "it is not worth while;" and accordingly I reseated myself, and appeared once more occupied in saying *des belles choses* to my kind-hearted neighbour. I could not, however, with all my dissimulation, sustain a conversation from which my present feelings were so estranged for more than a few minutes; and I was never more glad than when my companion, displeased with my inattention, rose, and left me to my reflections.

What could Warburton (if he were the person I suspected) gain by the disguise he had assumed? He was too rich to profit by any sums he could win from Tyrrell, and too much removed from Thornton's station in life to derive any pleasure or benefit from his acquaintance with that person. His dark threats of vengeance in the Jardin des Plantes, and his reference to the two hundred pounds Tyrrell possessed, gave me, indeed, some clew as to his real object; but then — why this disguise? Had he known Tyrrell before in his proper semblance, and had anything passed between them which rendered this concealment now expedient? — this, indeed, seemed probable enough; but, was Thornton intrusted with the secret? — and, if revenge was the object, was that low man a partaker in its execution? — or was he not, more probably, playing the traitor to both? As for Tyrrell himself, his own designs upon Warburton were sufficient to prevent pity for any fall into the pit he had digged for others.

Meanwhile, time passed on, the hour grew late, and the greater part of the guests were gone; still I could not tear myself away; I looked from time to time at the door, with an indescribable feeling of anxiety. I longed, yet dreaded for it to open; I felt as if my own fate were in some degree im-

plicated in what was then agitating within, and I could not resolve to depart until I had formed some conclusions on the result.

At length the door opened; Tyrrell came forth: his countenance was perfectly hueless, his cheek was sunk and hollow, the excitement of two hours had been sufficient to render it so. I observed that his teeth were set, and his hand clenched, as they are when we idly seek, by the strained and extreme tension of the nerves, to sustain the fever and the agony of the mind. Warburton and Thornton followed him; the latter with his usual air of reckless indifference. His quick rolling eye glanced from the marquis to myself, and though his colour changed slightly, his nod of recognition was made with its wonted impudence and ease; but Warburton passed on, like Tyrrell, without noticing or heeding anything around. He fixed his large bright eye upon the figure which preceded him, without once altering its direction, and the extreme beauty of his features, which not all the dishevelled length of his hair and whiskers could disguise, was lighted up with a joyous but savage expression, which made me turn away, almost with a sensation of fear.

Just as Tyrrell was leaving the room, Warburton put his hand upon his shoulder. "Stay," said he, "I am going your way, and will accompany you." He turned round to Thornton (who was already talking with the marquis) as he said this, and waved his hand, as if to prevent his following; the next moment Tyrrell and himself had left the room.

I could not now remain longer. I felt a feverish restlessness, which impelled me onwards. I quitted the *salon*, and was on the staircase before the gamesters had descended. Warburton was, indeed, but a few steps before me; the stairs were but very dimly lighted by one expiring lamp; he did not turn round to see me, and was probably too much engrossed to hear me.

"You may yet have a favourable reverse," said he to Tyrrell.

"Impossible!" replied the latter, in a tone of such deep anguish, that it thrilled me to the very heart. "I am an utter

beggar: I have nothing in the world; I have no expectation but to starve!"

While he was saying this, I perceived by the faint and uncertain light, that Warburton's hand was raised to his own countenance.

"Have you *no* hope, — no spot wherein to look for comfort; is beggary your absolute and only possible resource from famine?" he replied in a low and suppressed tone.

At that moment we were just descending into the courtyard. Warburton was but one step behind Tyrrell; the latter made no answer: but, as he passed from the dark staircase into the clear moonlight of the court, I caught a glimpse of the big tears which rolled heavily and silently down his cheeks. Warburton laid his hand upon him.

"Turn," he cried, suddenly, "your cup is not yet full; look upon me — and *remember!*"

I pressed forward; the light shone full upon the countenance of the speaker; the dark hair was gone; my suspicions were true; I discovered at one glance the bright locks and lofty brow of Reginald Glanville. Slowly Tyrrell gazed, as if he were endeavouring to repel some terrible remembrance, which gathered, with every instant, more fearfully upon him; until, as the stern countenance of Glanville grew darker and darker in its mingled scorn and defiance, he uttered one low cry, and sank senseless upon the earth.

CHAPTER XXXI.

WELL, he is gone, and with him go these thoughts. — SHAKSPEARE.

What oh! for England! — SHAKSPEARE.

I HAVE always had an insuperable horror of being placed in what the vulgar call a "predicament." In a predicament I was most certainly placed at the present moment. A man

at my feet in a fit — the cause of it having very wisely disappeared, devolving upon me the charge of watching, recovering, and conducting home the afflicted person — made a concatenation of disagreeable circumstances as much unsuited to the temper of Henry Pelham as his evil fortune could possibly have contrived.

After a short pause of deliberation, I knocked up the porter, procured some cold water, and bathed Tyrrell's temples for several moments before he recovered. He opened his eyes slowly, and looked carefully round with a fearful and suspicious glance: "Gone — gone!" — he muttered; "ay — what did he here at such a moment? — vengeance — for what? *I* could not tell it would have killed her; let him thank his own folly. I do not fear; I defy his malice." And with these words Tyrrell sprang to his feet.

"Can I assist you to your home?" said I; "you are still unwell; pray suffer me to have that pleasure."

I spoke with some degree of warmth and sincerity; the unfortunate man stared wildly at me for a moment, before he replied. "Who," said he, at last, "who speaks to *me* — the lost — the guilty — the ruined, in the accents of interest and kindness?"

I placed his arm in mine, and drew him out of the yard into the open street. He looked at me with an eager and wistful survey, and then, by degrees, appearing to recover his full consciousness of the present and recollection of the past, he pressed my hand warmly, and after a short silence, during which we moved on slowly towards the Tuileries, he said, — "Pardon me, sir, if I have not sufficiently thanked you for your kindness and attention. I am now quite restored; the close room in which I have been sitting for so many hours, and the feverish excitement of play, acting upon a frame much debilitated by ill-health, occasioned my momentary indisposition. I am now, I repeat, quite recovered, and will no longer trespass upon your good-nature."

"Really," said I, "you had better not discard my services yet. Do suffer me to accompany you home."

"Home!" muttered Tyrrell, with a deep sigh; "no — no!"

and then, as if recollecting himself, he said, "I thank you, sir, but — but — "

I saw his embarrassment, and interrupted him.

"Well, if I cannot assist you any further, I will take your dismissal. I trust we shall meet again under auspices better calculated for improving acquaintance."

Tyrrell bowed, once more pressed my hand, and we parted. I hurried on up the long street towards my hôtel.

When I had got several paces beyond Tyrrell, I turned back to look at him. He was standing in the same place in which I had left him. I saw by the moonlight that his face and hands were raised towards heaven. It was but for a moment: his attitude changed while I was yet looking, and he slowly and calmly continued his way in the same direction as myself. When I reached my chambers I hastened immediately to bed, but not to sleep: the extraordinary scene I had witnessed; the dark and ferocious expression of Glanville's countenance, so strongly impressed with every withering and deadly passion; the fearful and unaccountable remembrance that had seemed to gather over the livid and varying face of the gamester; the mystery of Glanville's disguise; the intensity of a revenge so terribly expressed, together with the restless and burning anxiety I felt, not from idle curiosity, but from my early and intimate friendship for Glanville, to fathom its cause,—all crowded upon my mind with a feverish confusion that effectually banished repose.

It was with that singular sensation of pleasure which none but those who have passed frequent nights in restless and painful agitation can recognize that I saw the bright sun penetrate through my shutters, and heard Bedos move across my room.

"What hour will monsieur have the post-horses?" said that praiseworthy valet.

"At eleven," answered I, springing out of bed with joy at the change of scene which the very mention of my journey brought before my mind.

I was turning listlessly, as I sat at breakfast, over the

pages of "Galignani's Messenger," when the following paragraph caught my attention: —

"It is rumored among the circles of the Faubourg that a duel was fought on ——, between a young Englishman and Monsieur D——; the cause of it is said to be the pretensions of both to the beautiful Duchesse de P——, who, if report be true, cares for neither of the gallants, but lavishes her favours upon a certain *attaché* to the English embassy."

"Such," thought I, "are the materials for all human histories. Every one who reads will eagerly swallow this account as true: if an author were writing the memoirs of the court, he would compile his facts and scandal from this very collection of records; and yet, though so near the truth, how totally false it is! Thank Heaven, however, that at least I am not suspected of the degradation of the duchesse's love: to fight for her may make me seem a fool; to be loved by her would constitute me a villain."

"The horses, sir!" said Bedos; and "The bill, sir!" said the *garçon*. Alas! that *those* and *that* should be coupled together; and that we can never take our departure without such awful witnesses of our sojourn. Well, to be brief, the bill for once *was* discharged; the horses snorted; the carriage-door was opened; I entered; Bedos mounted behind; crack went the whips; off went the steeds; — and so terminated my adventures at dear Paris.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Oh, cousin, you know him, — the fine gentleman they talk of so much in town. — Wycherley: *Dancing Master.*

By the bright days of my youth, there is something truly delightful in the quick motion of four, ay, or even two post-horses! In France, where one's steeds are none of the swift-

est, the pleasures of travelling are not quite so great as in England; still, however, to a man who is tired of one scene, panting for another; in love with excitement, and yet not wearied of its pursuit,—the turnpike-road is more grateful than the easiest chair ever invented, and the little prison we entitle a carriage more cheerful than the state rooms of Dev onshire House.

We reached Calais in safety, and in good time, the next day.

"Will monsieur dine in his rooms or at the *table d'hôte?*"

"In his rooms, of course," said Bedos, indignantly deciding the question. A French valet's dignity is always involved in his master's.

"You are too good, Bedos," said I; "I shall dine at the *table d'hôte;* whom have you there in general?"

"Really," said the *garçon,* "we have such a swift succession of guests that we seldom see the same faces two days running. We have as many changes as an English administration."

"You are facetious," said I.

"No," returned the *garçon,* who was a philosopher as well as a wit; "no, my digestive organs are very weak, and *par conséquence,* I am naturally melancholy. *Ah, ma foi, très triste!*" and with these words the sentimental plate-changer placed his hand—I can scarcely say whether on his heart or his stomach—and sighed bitterly.

"How long," said I, "does it want to dinner?" My question restored the *garçon* to himself.

"Two hours, monsieur, two hours," and twirling his *serviette* with an air of exceeding importance, off went my melancholy acquaintance to compliment new customers, and complain of his digestion.

After I had arranged my *toilette,* yawned three times, and drunk two bottles of soda-water, I strolled into the town. As I was sauntering along leisurely enough, I heard my name pronounced behind me. I turned, and saw Sir Willoughby Townshend, an old baronet of an antediluvian age,—a fossil witness of the wonders of England before the deluge of French manners swept away ancient customs, and created, out of the

wrecks of what had been, a new order of things and a new race of mankind.

"Ah! my dear Mr. Pelham, how are you? and the worthy Lady Frances, your mother, and your excellent father,—all well? I 'm delighted to hear it. Russelton," continued Sir Willoughby, turning to a middle-aged man, whose arm he held, "you remember Pelham—true Whig—great friend of Sheridan?—let me introduce his son to you. Mr. Russelton, Mr. Pelham; Mr. Pelham, Mr. Russelton."

At the name of the person thus introduced to me, a thousand recollections crowded upon my mind: the contemporary and rival of Napoleon; the autocrat of the great world of fashion and cravats; the mighty genius before whom aristocracy hath been humbled and *ton* abashed; at whose nod the haughtiest *noblesse* of Europe had quailed; who had introduced, by a single example, starch into neckcloths, and had fed the pampered appetites of his boot-tops on champagne; whose coat and whose friend were cut with an equal grace; and whose name was connected with every triumph that the world's great virtue of audacity could achieve,—the illustrious, the immortal Russelton, stood before me! I recognized in him a congenial though a superior spirit, and I bowed with a profundity of veneration with which no other human being has ever inspired me.

Mr. Russelton seemed pleased with my evident respect, and returned my salutation with a mock dignity which enchanted me. He offered me his disengaged arm; I took it with transport, and we all three proceeded up the street.

"So," said Sir Willoughby,—"so, Russelton, you like your quarters here; plenty of sport among the English, I should think: you have not forgot the art of quizzing; eh, old fellow?"

"Even if I had," said Mr. Russelton, speaking very slowly, "the sight of Sir Willoughby Townshend would be quite sufficient to refresh my memory. Yes," continued the venerable wreck, after a short pause,—"yes, I like my residence pretty well; I enjoy a calm conscience, and a clean shirt: what more can man desire? I have made acquaintance with

a tame parrot, and I have taught it to say, whenever an English fool with a stiff neck and a loose swagger passes him,—'True Briton—true Briton.' I take care of my health, and reflect upon old age. I have read 'Gil Blas,' and the 'Whole Duty of Man;' and, in short, what with instructing my parrot and improving myself, I think I pass my time as creditably and decorously as the Bishop of Winchester, or my Lord of A—— himself. So you have just come from Paris, I presume, Mr. Pelham?"

"I left it yesterday."

"Full of those horrid English, I suppose; thrusting their broad hats and narrow minds into every shop in the Palais Royal,—winking their dull eyes at the damsels of the counter, and manufacturing their notions of French into a higgle for *sous*. Oh! the monsters!—they bring on a bilious attack whenever I think of them: the other day one of them accosted me, and talked me into a nervous fever about patriotism and roast pigs; luckily I was near my own house, and reached it before the thing became fatal: but only think, had I wandered too far when he met me! at my time of life, the shock would have been too great; I should certainly have perished in a fit. I hope, at least, they would have put the cause of my death in my epitaph,—'Died, of an Englishman, John Russelton, Esq., aged,' etc. Pah! You are not engaged, Mr. Pelham; dine with me to-day; Willoughby and his umbrella are coming."

"Volontiers," said I, "though I was going to make observations on men and manners at the *table d'hôte* of my hôtel."

"I am most truly grieved," replied Mr. Russelton, "at depriving you of much amusement. With me you will only find some tolerable Lafitte, and an anomalous dish my *cuisinère* calls a mutton-chop. It will be curious to see what variation in the monotony of mutton she will adopt to-day. The first time I ordered 'a chop,' I thought I had amply explained every necessary particular; a certain portion of flesh, and a gridiron: at seven o'clock up came a *côtelette panée! Faute de mieux*, I swallowed the composition, drowned as it was in a most pernicious sauce. I had one hour's sleep, and

the nightmare, in consequence. The next day, I imagined no mistake *could* be made: sauce was strictly prohibited; all extra ingredients laid under a most special veto, and a natural gravy gently recommended; the cover was removed, and lo! a breast of mutton, all bone and gristle, like the dying gladiator! This time my heart was too full for wrath; I sat down and wept. To-day will be the third time I shall make the experiment, if French cooks will consent to let one starve upon nature. For my part, I have no stomach left now for art: I wore out my digestion in youth, swallowing Jack St. Leger's suppers, and Sheridan's promises to pay. Pray, Mr. Pelham, did you try Staub when you were at Paris?"

"Yes; and thought him one degree better than Stultz, whom, indeed, I have long condemned, as fit only for minors at Oxford and majors in the infantry."

"True," said Russelton, with a very faint smile at a pun, somewhat in his own way, and levelled at a tradesman of whom he was perhaps a little jealous,—"true; Stultz aims at making *gentlemen*, not *coats;* there is a degree of aristocratic pretension in his stitches which is vulgar to an appalling degree. You can tell a Stultz coat anywhere, which is quite enough to damn it: the moment a man's known by an invariable cut, and that not original, it ought to be all over with him. Give me the man who makes the tailor, not the tailor who makes the man."

"Right, by Jove!" cried Sir Willoughby, who was as badly dressed as one of Sir E——'s dinners. "Right; just my opinion. I have always told my Schneiders to make my clothes neither in the fashion nor out of it; to copy no other man's coat, and to cut their cloth according to my natural body, not according to an isosceles triangle. Look at this coat, for instance," and Sir Willoughby Townshend made a dead halt, that we might admire his garment the more accurately.

"Coat!" said Russelton, with an appearance of the most *naïve* surprise, and taking hold of the collar, suspiciously, by the finger and thumb; "coat, Sir Willoughby! do you call *this thing a coat?*"

CHAPTER XXXIII.

J'ai toujours cru que le bon n'était que le *beau* mis en action. — Rousseau.

Shortly after Russelton's answer to Sir Willoughby's eulogistic observations on his own attire, I left those two worthies till I was to join them at dinner: it wanted three hours yet to that time, and I repaired to my quarters to bathe and write letters. I scribbled one to Madame d'Anville, full of antitheses and maxims, sure to charm her; another to my mother, to prepare her for my arrival; and a third to Lord Vincent, giving him certain commissions at Paris, which I had forgotten personally to execute.

My pen is not that of a ready writer; and what with yawning, stretching, and putting pen to paper, it was time to bathe and dress before my letters were completed. I set off to Russelton's abode in high spirits, and fully resolved to make the most of a character so original.

It was a very small room in which I found him; he was stretched in an easy-chair before the fireplace, gazing complacently at his feet, and apparently occupied in anything but listening to Sir Willoughby Townshend, who was talking with great vehemence about politics and the corn laws. Notwithstanding the heat of the weather, there was a small fire on the hearth, which, aided by the earnestness of his efforts to convince his host, put poor Sir Willoughby into a most intense perspiration. Russelton, however, seemed enviably cool, and hung over the burning wood like a cucumber on a hotbed. Sir Willoughby came to a full stop by the window, and (gasping for breath) attempted to throw it open.

"What are you doing? for Heaven's sake, what are you doing?" cried Russelton, starting up; "do you mean to kill me?"

"Kill you!" said Sir Willoughby, quite aghast.

"Yes; kill me? Is it not quite cold enough already in this d—d seafaring place, without making my only retreat, humble as it is, a theatre for thorough draughts? Have I not had the rheumatism in my left shoulder, and the ague in my little finger, these last six months; and must you now terminate my miserable existence at one blow by opening that abominable lattice? Do you think, because your great frame, fresh from the Yorkshire wolds, and compacted of such materials that one would think, in eating your beeves, you had digested their hide into skin,—do you think, because your limbs might be cut up into planks for a seventy-eight, and warranted waterproof without pitch, because of the density of their pores,—do you think, because you are as impervious as an araphorostic shoe, that I, John Russelton, am equally impenetrable, and that you are to let easterly winds play about my room like children, begetting rheums and asthmas, and all manner of catarrhs? I do beg, Sir Willoughby Townshend, that you will suffer me to die a more natural and civilized death;" and so saying Russelton sank down into his chair, apparently in the last stage of exhaustion.

Sir Willoughby—who remembered the humourist in all his departed glory, and still venerated him as a temple where the deity yet breathed, though the altar was overthrown—made to this extraordinary remonstrance no other reply than a long *whiff*, and a "Well, Russelton, damme, but you're a queer fellow."

Russelton now turned to me, and invited me, with a tone of the most ladylike languor, to sit down near the fire. As I am naturally of a chilly disposition, and fond, too, of beating people in their own line, I drew a chair close to the hearth, declared the weather was very cold, and requested permission to ring the bell for some more wood. Russelton stared for a moment, and then, with a politeness he had not deigned to exert before, approached his chair to mine, and began a conversation, which, in spite of his bad witticisms and peculiarity of manner, I found singularly entertaining.

Dinner was announced, and we adjourned to another room: poor Sir Willoughby—with his waistcoat unbuttoned, and

breathing like a pug in a phthisis — groaned bitterly when he discovered that this apartment was smaller and hotter than the one before. Russelton immediately helped him to some scalding soup, and said, as he told the servant to hand Sir Willoughby the cayenne, "You will find this, my dear Townshend, a very sensible *potage* for this severe season."

Dinner went off tamely enough, with the exception of "our fat friend's" agony, which Russelton enjoyed most luxuriously. The threatened mutton-chops did not make their appearance; and the dinner, though rather too small, was excellently cooked, and better arranged. With the dessert the poor baronet rose, and, pleading sudden indisposition, tottered out of the door.

When he was gone, Russelton threw himself back in his chair, and laughed for several minutes, with a low chuckling sound, till the tears ran down his cheek.

After a few jests at Sir Willoughby, our conversation turned upon other individuals. I soon saw that Russelton was a soured and disappointed man: his remarks on people were all sarcasms; his mind was overflowed with a suffusion of ill-nature; he bit as well as growled. No man of the world ever, I am convinced, becomes a real philosopher in retirement. People who have been employed for years upon trifles have not the greatness of mind which could alone make them indifferent to what they have coveted all their lives as most enviable and important.

"Have you read ——'s memoirs?" said Mr. Russelton. "No! Well, I imagined every one had at least dipped into them. I have often had serious thoughts of dignifying my own retirement by the literary employment of detailing my adventures in the world. I think I could throw a new light upon things and persons which my contemporaries will shrink back like owls at perceiving."

"Your life," said I, "must indeed furnish matter of equal instruction and amusement."

"Ay," answered Russelton; "amusement to the fools, but instruction to the knaves. I am indeed a lamentable example of the fall of ambition. I brought starch into all the neck-

cloths in England, and I end by tying my own at a three-inch looking-glass at Calais. You are a young man, Mr. Pelham, about to commence life, probably with the same views as (though greater advantages than) myself; perhaps, in indulging my egotism, I shall not weary without recompensing you.

"I came into the world with an inordinate love of glory and a great admiration of the original: these propensities might have made me a Shakspeare; they did more,—they made me a Russelton! When I was six years old, I cut my jacket into a coat, and turned my aunt's best petticoat into a waistcoat. I disdained at eight the language of the vulgar; and when my father asked me to fetch his slippers, I replied that my soul swelled beyond the limits of a lackey's. At nine, I was self-inoculated with propriety of ideas. I rejected malt with the air of his Majesty, and formed a violent affection for maraschino; though starving at school, I never took twice of pudding, and paid sixpence a week out of my shilling to have my shoes blacked. As I grew up, my notions expanded. I gave myself, without restraint, to the ambition that burnt within me; I cut my old friends, who were rather envious than emulous of my genius, and I employed three tradesmen to make my gloves,—one for the hand, a second for the fingers, and a third for the thumb! These two qualities made me courted and admired by a new race; for the great secrets of being courted are to shun others, and seem delighted with yourself. The latter is obvious enough; who the deuce *should* be pleased with you, if you are not pleased with yourself?

"Before I left college I fell in love. Other fellows, at my age, in such a predicament would have whined, shaved only twice a week, and written verses. I did none of the three; the last indeed I tried, but, to my infinite surprise, I found my genius was not universal. I began with

"'Sweet nymph, for whom I wake my muse.'

"For this, after considerable hammering, I could only think of the rhyme 'shoes'—so I began again,—

"'Thy praise demands much softer lutes;'

and the fellow of this verse terminated like myself in 'boots.' Other efforts were equally successful—'bloom' suggested to my imagination no rhyme but 'perfume!' 'despair' only reminded me of my 'hair;' and 'hope' was met, at the end of the second verse, by the inharmonious antithesis of '*soap*.' Finding, therefore, that my *forte* was not in the Pierian line, I redoubled my attention to my dress; I *coated* and *cravatted* with all the attention the very inspiration of my rhymes seemed to advise; in short, I thought the best pledge I could give my Dulcinea of my passion for her person would be to show her what affectionate veneration I could pay to my own.

"My mistress could not withhold from me her admiration, but she denied me her love. She confessed Mr. Russelton was the best dressed man at the University, and had the whitest hands; and two days after this avowal, she ran away with a great rosy-cheeked extract from Leicestershire.

"I did not blame her: I pitied her too much; but I made a vow never to be in love again. In spite of all advantages I kept my oath, and avenged myself on the species for the insult of the individual.

"Before I commenced a part which was to continue through life, I considered deeply on the humours of the spectators. I saw that the character of the more fashionable of the English was servile to rank, and yielding to pretension; they admire you for your acquaintance, and cringe to you for your conceit. The first thing, therefore, was to know great people; the second, to control them. I dressed well, and had good horses; that was sufficient to make me sought by the young of my own sex. I talked scandal, and was never abashed; that was more than enough to make me admired among the matrons of the other. It is single men and married women to whom are given the Saint Peter's keys of Society. I was soon admitted into its heaven; I was more,—I was one of its saints. I became imitated as well as initiated. I was the rage,—the lion. Why?—was I better,—was I richer,—was I handsomer,—was I cleverer, than my kind? No, no [and here Russelton ground his teeth with a strong and wrathful expression of scorn];—and had I been all,—had I been a very

concentration and monopoly of all human perfections, they would not have valued me at half the price they *did* set on me. It was — I will tell you the simple secret, Mr. Pelham — it was because I *trampled on them*, that, like crushed herbs, they sent up a grateful incense in return.

"Oh! it was balm to my bitter and loathing temper, to see those who would have spurned *me* from them, if they dared, writhe beneath my lash, as I withheld or inflicted it at will. I was the magician who held the great spirits that longed to tear me to pieces, by one simple spell which a superior hardihood had won me,— and, by Heaven, I did not spare to exert it.

"Well, well, this is but an idle recollection now! all human power, says the proverb of every language, is but of short duration. Alexander did not conquer kingdoms forever; and Russelton's good fortune deserted him at last. Napoleon died in exile, and so shall I; but we have both had our day, and mine was the brightest of the two, for it had no change till the evening. I am more happy than people would think for,— 'Je ne suis pas souvent où mon corps est,' — I live in a world of recollections, I trample again upon coronets and ermine, the glories of the small great! I give once more laws which no libertine is so hardy as not to feel exalted in adopting; I hold my court and issue my fiats; I am like a madman, and out of the very straws of my cell I make my subjects and my realm; and when I wake from these bright visions, and see myself an old, deserted man, forgotten, and decaying inch by inch in a foreign village, I can at least summon sufficient of my ancient regality of spirit not to sink beneath the reverse. If I am inclined to be melancholy, why, I extinguish my fire, and imagine I have demolished a duchess. I steal up to my solitary chamber, to renew again, in my sleep, the phantoms of my youth; to carouse with princes; to legislate for nobles; and to wake in the morning [here Russelton's countenance and manner suddenly changed to an affectation of methodistical gravity], and thank Heaven that I have still a coat to my stomach as well as to my back, and that I am safely delivered of such villanous company; 'to for-

swear sack and live cleanly,' during the rest of my sublunary existence."

After this long detail of Mr. Russelton the conversation was but dull and broken. I could not avoid indulging a revery upon what I had heard, and my host was evidently still revolving the recollections his narration had conjured up; we sat opposite each other for several minutes, as abstracted and distracted as if we had been a couple two months married; till at last I rose and tendered my adieus. Russelton received them with his usual coldness, but more than his usual civility, for he followed me to the door.

Just as they were about to shut it, he called me back. "Mr. Pelham," said he, "Mr. Pelham, when you come back this way, do look in upon me, and — as you will be going a good deal into society — *just find out what people say of my manner of life!*"[1]

CHAPTER XXXIV.

> An old worshipful gentleman, that had a great estate,
> And kept a brave old house at a hospitable rate. — *Old Song.*

I think I may, without much loss to the reader, pass in silence over my voyage, the next day, to Dover, — horrible reminiscence! I may also spare him an exact detail of all the inns and impositions between that seaport and London; nor will it be absolutely necessary to the plot of this history to linger over every milestone between the metropolis and Glenmorris Castle, where my uncle and my mother were impatiently awaiting the arrival of the candidate to be.

[1] It will be perceived by those readers who are kind or patient enough to reach the conclusion of this work, that Russelton is specified as one of my few *dramatis personæ* of which only the *first* outline is taken from real life, and from a very noted personage; all the rest — all, indeed, which forms and marks the character thus briefly delineated — is drawn solely from imagination.

It was a fine bright evening when my carriage entered the park. I had not seen the place for years; and I felt my heart swell with something like family pride, as I gazed on the magnificent extent of hill and plain that opened upon me, as I passed the ancient and ivy-covered lodge. Large groups of trees, scattered on either side, seemed, in their own antiquity, the witness of that of the family which had given them existence. The sun set on the waters which lay gathered in a lake at the foot of the hill, breaking the waves into unnumbered sapphires, and tinging the dark firs that overspread the margin with a rich and golden light that put me excessively in mind of the Duke of ——'s livery!

When I descended at the gate, the servants, who stood arranged in an order so long that it almost startled me, received me with a visible gladness and animation, which showed me, at one glance, the old-fashioned tastes of their master. Who, in these days, ever inspires his servants with a single sentiment of regard or interest for himself or his whole race? That tribe, one never, indeed, considers as possessing a life separate from their services to us: beyond that purpose of existence, we know not even if they exist. As Providence made the stars for the benefit of earth, so it made servants for the use of gentlemen; and, as neither stars nor servants appear except when we want them, so I suppose they are in a sort of suspense from *being*, except at those important and happy moments.

To return — for if I have any fault, it is too great a love for abstruse speculation and reflection — I was formally ushered through a great hall, hung round with huge antlers and rusty armour, through a lesser one, supported by large stone columns, and without any other adornment than the arms of the family; then through an anteroom, covered with tapestry, representing the gallantries of King Solomon to the Queen of Sheba; and, lastly, into the apartment honoured by the august presence of Lord Glenmorris. That personage was dividing the sofa with three spaniels and a setter; he rose hastily when I was announced, and then checking the first impulse which hurried him, perhaps, into an unseemly warmth of salutation,

held out his hand with a stately air of kindly protection, and while he pressed mine, surveyed me from head to foot, to see how far my appearance justified his condescension.

Having, at last, satisfied himself, he proceeded to inquire after the state of my appetite. He smiled benignantly when I confessed that I was excessively well prepared to testify its capacities (the first idea of all kind-hearted, old-fashioned people is to stuff you), and, silently motioning to the gray-headed servant who stood in attendance, till, receiving the expected sign, he withdrew, Lord Glenmorris informed me that dinner was over for every one but myself, that for me it would be prepared in an instant, that Mr. Toolington had expired four days since, that my mother was, at that moment, canvassing for me, and that my own electioneering qualities were to open their exhibition with the following day.

After this communication there was a short pause. "What a beautiful place this is!" said I, with great enthusiasm. Lord Glenmorris was pleased with the compliment, simple as it was.

"Yes," said he, "it is, and I have made it still more so than you have yet been able to perceive."

"You have been planting, probably, on the other side of the park?"

"No," said my uncle, smiling; "Nature had done everything for this spot when I came to it, but one; and the addition of that one ornament is the only real triumph which art ever can achieve."

"What is it?" asked I; "oh, I know — water."

"You are mistaken," answered Lord Glenmorris; "it is the ornament of — *happy faces.*"

I looked up to my uncle's countenance in sudden surprise. I cannot explain how I was struck with the expression which it wore: so calmly bright and open! — it was as if the very daylight had settled there.

"You don't understand this at present, Henry," said he, after a moment's silence; "but you will find it, of all rules for the improvement of property, the easiest to learn. Enough of this now. Were you not in despair at leaving Paris?"

"I should have been some months ago; but when I received my mother's summons, I found the temptations of the Continent very light in comparison with those held out to me here."

"What, have you already arrived at that great epoch when vanity casts off its *first* skin, and ambition succeeds to pleasure? Why — but thank Heaven that you have lost my moral; your dinner is announced."

Most devoutly *did* I thank Heaven, and most earnestly did I betake myself to do honour to my uncle's hospitality.

I had just finished my repast, when my mother entered. She was, as you might well expect from her maternal affection, quite overpowered with joy; *first*, at finding my hair grown so much darker, and, *secondly*, at my looking so well. We spent the whole evening in discussing the great business for which I had been summoned. Lord Glenmorris promised me money, and my mother advice; and I, in my turn, enchanted them by promising to make the best use of both.

CHAPTER XXXV.

Cor. Your good voice, sir — what say you?
2d Cit. You shall have it, worthy sir. — *Coriolanus.*

The borough of Buyemall had long been in undisputed possession of the Lords of Glenmorris, till a rich banker, of the name of Lufton, had bought a large estate in the immediate neighbourhood of Glenmorris Castle. This event, which was the precursor of a mighty revolution in the borough of Buyemall, took place in the first year of my uncle's accession to his property. A few months afterwards, a vacancy in the borough occurring, my uncle procured the nomination of one of his own political party. To the great astonishment of Lord Glenmorris, and the great gratification of the burghers of Buyemall, Mr. Lufton offered himself in opposition to the

Glenmorris candidate. In this age of enlightenment, innovation has no respect for the most sacred institutions of antiquity. The burghers, for the only time since their creation as a body, were cast first into doubt, and secondly into rebellion. The Lufton faction, *horresco referens*, were triumphant, and the rival candidate was returned. From that hour the borough of Buyemall was open to all the world.

My uncle — who was a good, easy man, and had some strange notions of free representation and liberty of election — professed to care very little for this event. He contented himself, henceforward, with exerting his interest for one of the members, and left the other seat entirely at the disposal of the line of Lufton, which, from the time of the first competition, continued peaceably to monopolize it.

During the last two years, my uncle's candidate, the late Mr. Toolington, had been gradually dying of a dropsy, and the Luftons had been so *particularly* attentive to the honest burghers that it was shrewdly suspected a bold push was to be made for the other seat. During the last month these doubts were changed into certainty. Mr. Augustus Leopold Lufton, eldest son of Benjamin Lufton, Esq., had publicly declared his intention of starting at the decease of Mr. Toolington; against this personage behold myself armed and arrayed.

Such is, in brief, the history of the borough up to the time in which I was to take a prominent share in its interests and events.

On the second day after my arrival at the castle, the following advertisement appeared at Buyemall: —

To the Independent Electors of the Borough of Buyemall.

Gentlemen, — In presenting myself to your notice, I advance a claim not altogether new and unfounded. My family have for centuries been residing amongst you, and exercising that interest which reciprocal confidence and good offices may fairly create. Should it be my good fortune to be chosen your representative, you may rely upon my utmost endeavours to deserve that honour One word upon the principles I espouse: they are those which have found their advocates amongst the

wisest and the best; they are those which, hostile alike to the encroachments of the crown and the licentiousness of the people, would support the real interests of both. Upon these grounds, gentlemen, I have the honour to solicit your votes; and it is with the sincerest respect for your ancient and honourable body, that I subscribe myself your very obedient servant,

HENRY PELHAM.

Glenmorris Castle, etc.

Such was the first public signification of my intentions; it was drawn up by Mr. Sharpon, our lawyer, and considered by our friends as a masterpiece: for, as my mother sagely observed, it did not commit me in a single instance,—espoused no principle, and yet professed principles which all parties would allow were the best.

At the first house where I called, the proprietor was a clergyman of good family, who had married a lady from Baker Street: of course the Reverend Combermere St. Quintin and his wife valued themselves upon being "*genteel.*" I arrived at an unlucky moment; on entering the hall, a dirty footboy was carrying a yellow-ware dish of potatoes into the back room. Another Ganymede (a sort of footboy-major), who opened the door, and who was still *settling himself into his coat*, which he had slipped on at my tintinnabulary summons, ushered me with a mouth full of bread and cheese into this said back room. I gave up everything as lost when I entered, and saw the lady helping her youngest child to some ineffable trash, which I have since heard is called "blackberry pudding." Another of the tribe was bawling out, with a loud, hungry tone,—"A 'tato, pa!" The father himself was carving for the little group, with a napkin stuffed into the top button-hole of his waistcoat, and the mother, with a long bib, plentifully bespattered with congealing gravy, and the nectarian liquor of the "blackberry pudding," was sitting with a sort of presiding complacency, on a high stool, like Juno on Olympus, enjoying rather than stilling the confused hubbub of the little domestic deities, who ate, clattered, spattered, and squabbled around her.

Amidst all this din and confusion, the candidate for the

borough of Buyemall was ushered into the household privacy of the *genteel* Mr. and Mrs. St. Quintin. Up started the lady at the sound of my name. The Rev. Combermere St. Quintin seemed frozen into stone. The plate between the youngest child and the blackberry pudding stood as still as the sun in Ajalon. The morsel between the mouth of the elder boy and his fork had a respite from mastication. The Seven Sleepers could not have been spell-bound more suddenly and completely.

"Ah," cried I, advancing eagerly, with an air of serious and yet abrupt gladness; "how lucky that I should find you all at luncheon! I was up and had finished breakfast so early this morning that I am half famished. Only think how fortunate, Hardy (turning round to one of the members of my committee, who accompanied me); I was just saying what would I not give to find Mr. St. Quintin at luncheon. Will you allow me, madam, to make one of your party?"

Mrs. Quintin coloured and faltered, and muttered out something which I was fully resolved *not* to hear. I took a chair, looked round the table, not *too* attentively, and said — "Cold veal; ah! ah! nothing I like so much. May I trouble you, Mr. St. Quintin? — Hollo, my little man, let 's see if you can't give me a potato. There 's a brave fellow. How old are you, my young hero? — to look at your mother, I should say two, to look at *you*, six."

"He is four next May," said his mother, colouring, and this time *not* painfully.

"Indeed?" said I, surveying him earnestly; and then, in a graver tone, I turned to the Rev. Combermere with — "I think you have a branch of your family still settled in France. I met a St. Quintin (the Duc de Poictiers) abroad."

"Yes," said Mr. Combermere, "yes, the name is still in Normandy, but I was not aware of the title."

"No!" said I, with surprise; "and yet [with another look at the boy] it is astonishing how long family likenesses last. I was a great favourite with all the duc's children. Do you know I must trouble you for some more veal? it is so very good, and I am so very hungry."

"How long have you been abroad?" said Mrs. St. Quintin, who had slipped off her bib, and smoothed her ringlets; for which purposes I had been most adroitly looking in an opposite direction the last three minutes.

"About seven or eight months. The fact is, that the Continent only does for us English people to see,—not to inhabit; and yet there are some advantages there, Mr. St. Quintin!—among others, that of the due respect ancient birth is held in. Here, as you know, 'money makes the man,' as the vulgar proverb has it."

"Yes," said Mr. St. Quintin, with a sigh, "it is really dreadful to see those upstarts rising around us, and throwing everything that is respectable and ancient into the background. Dangerous times these, Mr. Pelham,—dangerous times; nothing but innovation upon the most sacred institutions. I am sure, Mr. Pelham, that your principles must be decidedly against these new-fashioned doctrines, which lead to nothing but anarchy and confusion,—absolutely nothing."

"I am delighted to find you so much of my opinion!" said I. "I cannot endure anything *that leads to anarchy and confusion.*"

Here Mr. Combermere glanced at his wife, who rose, called to the children, and, accompanied by them, gracefully withdrew.

"Now, then," said Mr. Combermere, drawing his chair nearer to me,—"now, Mr. Pelham, we can discuss these matters. Women are no politicians;" and, at this sage aphorism, the Rev. Combermere laughed a low solemn laugh, which could have come from no other lips. After I had joined in this grave merriment for a second or two, I hemmed thrice, and with a countenance suited to the subject and the host, plunged at once *in medias res.*

"Mr. St. Quintin," said I, "you are already aware, I think, of my intention of offering myself as a candidate for the borough of Buyemall. I could not think of such a measure, without calling upon you, the very first person, to solicit the honour of your vote." Mr. Combermere looked pleased, and

prepared to reply. "You are the very first person I called upon," repeated I.

Mr. Combermere smiled. "Well, Mr. Pelham," said he, "our families have long been on the most intimate footing."

"Ever since," cried I, "ever since Henry the Seventh's time have the houses of St. Quintin and Glenmorris been allied! Your ancestors, you know, were settled in the county before ours, and my mother assures me that she has read, in some old book or another, a long account of your forefather's kind reception of mine at the castle of St. Quintin. I *do* trust, sir, that we have done nothing to forfeit a support so long afforded us."

Mr. St. Quintin bowed in speechless gratification; at length he found voice. "But your principles, Mr. Pelham?"

"Quite yours, my dear sir, *quite against anarchy and confusion.*"

"But the Catholic question, Mr. Pelham?"

"Oh! the Catholic question," repeated I, "is a question of great importance; it won't be carried. No, Mr. St. Quintin, no, it won't be carried; how *did* you think, my dear sir, that I could, in so great a question, act against my conscience?"

I said this with warmth, and Mr. St. Quintin was either too convinced or too timid to pursue so dangerous a topic any further. I blessed my stars when he paused, and not giving him time to think of another piece of debatable ground, continued,—"Yes, Mr. St. Quintin, I called upon you the very first person. Your rank in the county, your ancient birth, to be sure demanded it; and *I* only considered the long, long time the St. Quintins and Pelhams had been connected."

"Well," said the Rev. Combermere, "well, Mr. Pelham, you shall have my support; and I wish, from my very heart, all success to a young gentleman of such excellent principles."

CHAPTER XXXVI.

More voices!

. . . . . .

Sic. How now, my masters, have you chose this man?
Cit. He has our voices, sir! — *Coriolanus.*

From Mr. Combermere St. Quintin's we went to a bluff, hearty, radical wine-merchant, whom I had very little probability of gaining; but my success with the clerical Armado had inspirited me, and I did not suffer myself to fear, though I could scarcely persuade myself to hope. How exceedingly impossible it is, in governing men, to lay down positive rules, even where we know the temper of the individual to be gained! "You must be very stiff and formal with the St. Quintins," said my mother. She was right in the general admonition, and had I found them all seated in the best drawing-room,—Mrs. St. Quintin in her best attire, and the children on their best behaviour,—I should have been as stately as Don Quixote in a brocade dressing-gown; but finding them in such *dishabille,* I could not affect too great a plainness and almost coarseness of bearing, as if I had never been accustomed to anything more refined than I found there; nor might I, by any appearance of pride in myself, put them in mind of the wound their own pride had received. The difficulty was to blend with this familiarity a certain respect, just the same as a French ambassador might have testified towards the august person of George the Third, had he found his Majesty at dinner at one o'clock, over mutton and turnips.

In overcoming this difficulty, I congratulated myself with as much zeal and fervour as if I had performed the most important victory; for, whether it be innocent or sanguinary, in war or at an election there is no triumph so gratifying to the viciousness of human nature as the conquest of our fellow beings.

But I must return to my wine-merchant, Mr. Briggs. His house was at the entrance of the town of Buyemall; it stood enclosed in a small garden, flaming with crocuses and sunflowers, and exhibiting an arbour to the right, where, in the summer evenings, the respectable owner might be seen, with his waistcoat unbuttoned, in order to give that just and rational liberty to the subordinate parts of the human commonwealth which the increase of their consequence, after the hour of dinner, naturally demands. Nor, in those moments of dignified ease, was the worthy burgher without the divine inspirations of complacent contemplation which the weed of Virginia bestoweth. There, as he smoked and puffed, and looked out upon the bright crocuses, and meditated over the dim recollections of the hesternal journal, did Mr. Briggs revolve in his mind the vast importance of the borough of Buyemall to the British empire, and the vast importance of John Briggs to the borough of Buyemall.

When I knocked at the door, a prettyish maid-servant opened it with a smile, and a glance which the vendor of wine might probably have taught her himself after too large potations of his own spirituous manufactures. I was ushered into a small parlour, where sat, sipping brandy and water, a short, stout, *monosyllabic* sort of figure, corresponding in outward shape *to the name of Briggs,* — even unto a very nicety.

"Mr. Pelham," said this gentleman, — who was dressed in a brown coat, white waistcoat, buff-colored inexpressibles, with long strings, and gaiters of the same hue and substance as the breeches — "Mr. Pelham, pray be seated; excuse my rising; I 'm like the bishop in the story, Mr. Pelham, too old to rise;" and Mr. Briggs grunted out a short, quick, querulous "he — he — he," to which, of course, I replied to the best of my cachinnatory powers.

No sooner, however, did I begin to laugh, than Mr. Briggs stopped short; eyed me with a sharp, suspicious glance; shook his head, and pushed back his chair at least four feet from the spot it had hitherto occupied. Ominous sounds, thought I; I must sound this gentleman a little further, before I venture to treat him as the rest of his species.

"You have a nice situation here, Mr. Briggs," said I.

"Ah, Mr. Pelham, and a nice vote too, which is somewhat more to your purpose, I believe."

"Why," said I, "Mr. Briggs, to be frank with you, I do call upon you for the purpose of requesting your vote; give it me, or not, just as you please. You may be sure I shall not make use of the vulgar electioneering arts to coax gentlemen out of their votes. I ask you for yours as one freeman solicits another: if you think my opponent a fitter person to represent your borough, give your support to him in Heaven's name; if not, and you place confidence in me, I will, at least, endeavour not to betray it."

"Well done, Mr. Pelham," exclaimed Mr. Briggs. "I love candour: you speak just after my own heart; but you must be aware that one does not like to be bamboozled out of one's right of election by a smooth-tongued fellow, who sends one to the devil the moment the election is over; or still worse, to be frightened out of it by some stiffnecked proud coxcomb, with his pedigree in his hand, and his acres in his face, thinking he does you a marvellous honour to ask you at all. Sad times these for this free country, Mr. Pelham, when a parcel of conceited paupers, like Parson Quinny (as I call that reverend fool, Mr. Combermere St. Quintin), imagine they have a right to dictate to warm, honest men, who can buy their whole family out and out. I tell you what, Mr. Pelham, we shall never do anything for this country till we get rid of those landed aristocrats, with their ancestry and humbug. I hope you are of my mind, Mr. Pelham."

"Why," answered I, "there is certainly nothing so respectable in Great Britain as our commercial interest. A man who makes himself is worth a thousand men made by their forefathers."

"Very true, Mr. Pelham," said the wine-merchant, advancing his chair to me; and then — laying a short, *thickset* finger upon my arm — he looked up in my face with an investigating air, and said, — "Parliamentary Reform — what do you say to that? You 're not an advocate for ancient abuses and modern corruption, I hope, Mr. Pelham?"

"By no means," cried I, with an honest air of indignation, — "I have a conscience, Mr. Briggs, I have a conscience as a public man, no less than as a private one!"

"Admirable!" cried my host.

"No," I continued, glowing as I proceeded, "no, Mr. Briggs; I disdain to talk too much about my principles before they are tried; the proper time to proclaim them is when they have effected some good by being put into action. I won't supplicate your vote, Mr. Briggs, as my opponent may do; there must be a mutual confidence between my supporters and myself. When I appear before you a second time, you will have a right to see how far I have wronged that trust reposed in me as your representative. Mr. Briggs, I dare say it may seem rude and impolitic to address you in this manner; but I am a plain, blunt man, and I disdain the vulgar arts of electioneering, Mr. Briggs."

"Give us your fist, sir," cried the wine-merchant, in a transport; "give us your fist; I promise you my support, and I am delighted to vote for a *young gentleman of such excellent principles.*"

So much, dear reader, for Mr. Briggs, who became from that interview my stanchest supporter. I will not linger longer upon this part of my career: the above conversations may serve as a sufficient sample of my electioneering qualifications; and so I shall merely add, that after the due quantum of dining, drinking, spouting, lying, equivocating, bribing, rioting, head-breaking, promise-breaking, and — thank the god Mercury, who presides over elections — *chairing* of successful candidateship, I found myself fairly chosen "member for the borough of Buyemall."[1]

[1] It is fortunate that Mr. Pelham's election was not for a rotten borough; so that the satire of this chapter is not yet obsolete nor unsalutary. Parliamentary Reform has not terminated the tricks of canvassing; and Mr. Pelham's descriptions are as applicable now as when first written. All personal canvassing is but for the convenience of cunning, — the opportunity for manner to disguise principle. Public meetings, in which expositions of opinion must be clear, and will be cross-examined, are the only legitimate mode of canvass. The English begin to discover this truth; may these scenes serve to quicken their apprehension! — *The Author.*

CHAPTER XXXVII.

POLITICAL education is like the keystone to the arch: the strength of the whole depends upon it. — *Encycl. Brit. Sup. Art. "Education."*

I WAS sitting in the library of Glenmorris Castle, about a week after all the bustle of conquest and the *éclat* of victory had begun to subside, and quietly *dallying* with the dry toast, which constituted then, and does to this day, my ordinary breakfast, when I was accosted by the following speech from my uncle,—

"Henry, your success has opened to you a new career: I trust you intend to pursue it?"

"Certainly," was my answer.

"But you know, my dear Henry, that though you have great talents, which, I confess, I was surprised in the course of the election to discover, yet they want that careful cultivation, which, in order to shine in the House of Commons, they must receive. *Entre nous*, Henry, a little reading would do you no harm."

"Very well," said I; "suppose I begin with Walter Scott's novels; I am told they are extremely entertaining."

"True," answered my uncle, "but they don't contain the most accurate notions of history, or the soundest principles of political philosophy in the world. What did you think of doing to-day, Henry?"

"*Nothing!*" said I, very innocently.

"I should conceive that to be a usual answer of yours, Henry, to any similar question."

"I think it is," replied I, with great *naïveté*.

"Well, then, let us have the breakfast things taken away, and do *something* this morning."

"Willingly," said I, ringing the bell.

The table was cleared, and my uncle began his examination. Little, poor man, had he thought, from my usual bearing, and

the character of my education, that in general literature there were few subjects on which I was not to the full as well read as himself. I enjoyed his surprise, when, little by little, he began to discover the extent of my information; but I was mortified to find it was *only* surprise, *not* delight.

"You have," said he, "a considerable store of learning; far more than I could possibly have imagined you possessed; but it is *knowledge, not learning,* in which I wish you to be skilled. I would rather, in order to gift you with the former, that you were more destitute of the latter. The object of education is to instil *principles* which are hereafter to guide and instruct us: *facts* are only desirable so far as they illustrate those principles; principles ought therefore to precede facts! What then can we think of a system which reverses this evident order, overloads the memory with facts, and those of the most doubtful description, while it leaves us entirely in the dark with regard to the principles which could alone render this heterogeneous mass of any advantage or avail? Learning, without knowledge, is but a bundle of prejudices; a lumber of inert matter set before the threshold of the understanding to the exclusion of common-sense. Pause for a moment, and recall those of your contemporaries who are generally considered well-informed; tell me if their information has made them a whit the *wiser;* if not, it is only sanctified ignorance. Tell me if names with them are not a sanction for opinion; quotations, the representatives of axioms? All they have learned only serves as an excuse for all they are ignorant of. In one month, I will engage that you shall have a juster and deeper insight into wisdom than they have been all their lives acquiring: the great error of education is to fill the mind *first* with antiquated authors, and then to try the principles of the present day by the authorities and maxims of the past. We will pursue, for our plan, the exact reverse of the ordinary method. We will learn the doctrines of the day, as the first and most necessary step, and we will then glance over those which have passed away, as researches rather curious than useful.

"You see this very small pamphlet; it is a paper by Mr.

Mill upon Government. We will know this thoroughly, and when we have done so, we may rest assured that we have a far more accurate information upon the head and front of all political knowledge than two-thirds of the young men whose cultivation of mind you have usually heard panegyrized."

So saying, my uncle opened the pamphlet. He pointed out to me its close and mathematical reasoning, in which no flaw could be detected nor deduction controverted; and he filled up, as we proceeded, from the science of his own clear and enlarged mind, the various parts which the political logician had left for reflection to complete. My uncle had this great virtue of an *expositor*, that he never *over-explained;* he never made a parade of his lecture, nor confused what was simple by unnecessary comment.

When we broke off our first day's employment, I was quite astonished at the new light which had gleamed upon me. I felt like Sinbad the sailor, when, in wandering through the cavern in which he had been buried alive, he caught the first glimpse of the bright day. Naturally eager in everything I undertook, fond of application, and addicted to reflect over the various bearings of any object that once engrossed my attention, I made great advance in my new pursuit. After my uncle had brought me to be thoroughly conversant with certain and definite principles, we proceeded to illustrate them from fact. For instance, when we had finished the "Essay upon Government," we examined into the several Constitutions of England, British America, and France, the three countries which pretend the most to excellence in their government: and we were enabled to perceive and judge the defects and merits of each, because we had, *previously* to our examination, established certain rules by which they were to be investigated and tried. Here my sceptical indifference to facts was my chief reason for readily admitting knowledge. I had no prejudices to contend with, no obscure notions gleaned from the past, no popular maxims cherished as truths. Everything was placed before me as before a wholly impartial inquirer,— freed from all the decorations and delusions of sects and parties: every argument was stated with logical preci-

sion; every opinion referred to a logical test. Hence, in a very short time, I owned the justice of my uncle's assurance, as to the comparative concentration of knowledge. We went over the whole of Mill's articles in the Encyclopædia, over the more popular works of Bentham, and thence we plunged into the recesses of political economy. I know not why this study has been termed uninteresting. No sooner had I entered upon its consideration, than I could scarcely tear myself from it. Never from that moment to this have I ceased to pay it the most constant attention, not so much as a study as an amusement; but at that time my uncle's object was not to make me a profound political economist. "I wish," said he, "merely to give you an acquaintance with the principles of the science; not that you may be entitled to boast of knowledge, but that you may be enabled to avoid ignorance; not that you may discover truth, but that you may detect error. Of all sciences, political economy is contained in the fewest books, and yet is the most difficult to master; because all its higher branches require earnestness of reflection, proportioned to the scantiness of reading. Ricardo's work, together with some conversational enlargement on the several topics he treats of, will be enough for our present purpose. I wish *then* to show you, how inseparably allied is the great science of public policy with that of private morality. And this, Henry, is the grandest object of all. Now to our *present* study."

Well, gentle reader (I love, by the by, as you already perceive, that old-fashioned courtesy of addressing you),—well, to finish this part of my life, which, as it treats rather of my attempts at reformation than my success in error, must begin to weary you exceedingly, I acquired, more from my uncle's conversation than the books we read, a sufficient acquaintance with the elements of knowledge to satisfy myself and to please my instructor. And I must say, in justification of my studies and my tutor, that I derived one benefit from them which has continued with me to this hour; namely, I obtained a clear knowledge of moral principle. Before that time, the little ability I possessed only led me into acts which, I fear, most benevolent reader, thou hast already sufficiently condemned;

my good feelings — for I was not naturally bad — never availed me the least when present temptation came into my way. I had no guide but passion, no rule but the impulse of the moment. What else could have been the result of my education? If I was immoral, it was because I was never taught morality. Nothing, perhaps, is less innate than virtue. I own that the lessons of my uncle did not work miracles; that, living in the world, I have not separated myself from its errors and its follies; the vortex was too strong, the atmosphere too contagious: but I have at least avoided the crimes into which my temper would most likely have driven me. I ceased to look upon the world as a game one was to play fairly if possible, but where a little cheating was readily allowed; I no longer divorced the interests of other men from my own; if I endeavoured to blind them, it was neither by unlawful means nor for a purely selfish end; — if — but come, Henry Pelham, thou hast praised thyself enough for the present; and, after all, thy future adventures will best tell if thou art really amended.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Mihi jam non regia Roma,
Sed vacuum Tibur placet. — Horace.

"My dear child," said my mother to me, affectionately, "you must be very much bored here. To say truth, I am so myself. Your uncle is a very good man, but he does not make his house pleasant; and I have lately been very much afraid that he should convert you into a mere bookworm; after all, my dear Henry, you are quite clever enough to trust to your own ability. Your great geniuses never read."

"True, my dear mother," said I, with a most unequivocal yawn, and depositing on the table Mr. Bentham on "Popular Fallacies;" "true, and I am quite of your opinion. Did you see in the 'Post' of this morning, how full Cheltenham was?"

"Yes, Henry; and now you mention it, I don't think you could do better than to go there for a month or two. As for me, I must return to your father, whom I left at Lord H——'s, — a place, *entre nous*, very little more amusing than this; but then one does get one's *écarté* table, and that dear Lady Roseville, your old acquaintance, is staying there."

"Well," said I, musingly, "suppose we take our departure the beginning of next week? Our way will be the same as far as London, and the plea of attending you will be a good excuse to my uncle for proceeding no further in these confounded books."

"C'est une affaire finie," replied my mother, "and I will speak to your uncle myself."

Accordingly, the necessary disclosure of our intentions was made. Lord Glenmorris received it with proper indifference, so far as my mother was concerned; but expressed much pain at *my* leaving him so soon. However, when he found I was not so much gratified as honoured by his wishes for my longer *séjour*, he gave up the point with a delicacy that enchanted me.

The morning of our departure arrived. Carriage at the door,— bandboxes in the passage,— breakfast on the table, —myself in my greatcoat,— my uncle in his great chair. "My dear boy," said he, "I trust we shall meet again soon: you have abilities that may make you capable of effecting much good to your fellow-creatures; but you are fond of the world, and, though not averse to application, devoted to pleasure, and likely to pervert the gifts you possess. At all events, you have now learned, both as a public character and a private individual, the difference between good and evil. Make but this distinction: that whereas, in political science, the rules you have learned may be fixed and unerring, yet the application of them must vary with time and circumstance. We must bend, temporize, and frequently withdraw doctrines which, invariable in their truth, the prejudices of the time will not invariably allow, and even relinquish a faint hope of obtaining a great good for the certainty of obtaining a lesser; yet in the science of private morals, which relate for the

main part to ourselves individually, we have no right to deviate one single iota from the rule of our conduct. Neither time nor circumstance must cause us to modify or to change. Integrity knows no variation; honesty no shadow of turning. We must pursue the same course — stern and uncompromising — in the full persuasion that the path of right is like the bridge from earth to heaven, in the Mahometan creed; — if we swerve but a single hairsbreadth, we are irrevocably lost."

At this moment my mother joined us, with a "Well, my dear Henry, everything is ready; we have no time to lose."

My uncle rose, pressed my hand, and left in it a pocket-book, which I afterwards discovered to be most satisfactorily furnished. We took an edifying and affectionate farewell of each other, passed through the two rows of servants, drawn up in martial array, along the great hall, and I entered the carriage, and *went off* with the rapidity of a novel upon "fashionable life."

CHAPTER XXXIX.

Dic — si grave non est —
Quæ prima iratum ventrem placaverit esca. — Horace.

I did not remain above a day or two in town. I had never seen much of the humours of a watering-place, and my love of observing character made me exceedingly impatient for that pleasure. Accordingly, the first bright morning, I set off for Cheltenham. I was greatly struck with the entrance to that town; it is to these watering-places that a foreigner should be taken, in order to give him an adequate idea of the magnificent opulence and universal luxury of England. Our country has, in every province, what France only has in Paris, — a capital, consecrated to gayety, idleness, and enjoyment. London is both too busy in one class of society, and too pompous in another, to please a foreigner who has not excellent

recommendations to private circles. But at Brighton, Cheltenham, Hastings, Bath, he may, as at Paris, find all the gayeties of society, without knowing a single individual.

My carriage stopped at the —— Hotel. A corpulent and stately waiter, with gold buckles to a pair of very tight pantaloons, showed me upstairs. I found myself in a tolerable room facing the street, and garnished with two pictures of rocks and rivers, with a comely flight of crows hovering in the horizon of both as natural as possible,—only they were a little larger than the trees. Over the chimney-piece, where I had fondly hoped to find a looking-glass, was a grave print of General Washington, with one hand stuck out like the spout of a teapot. Between the two windows (unfavorable position!) was an oblong mirror, to which I immediately hastened, and had the pleasure of seeing my complexion catch the colour of the curtains that overhung the glass on each side, and exhibit that pleasing *rurality* of a pale green.

I shrunk back aghast, turned, and beheld the waiter. Had I seen myself in a glass delicately shaded by rose-hued curtains, I should gently and smilingly have said, "Have the goodness to bring me the bill of fare." As it was, I growled out, "Bring me the bill."

The stiff waiter bowed solemnly, and withdrew slowly. I looked round the room once more, and discovered the additional adornments of a tea-urn and a book. "Thank Heaven!" thought I, as I took up the latter, "it can't be one of Jeremy Bentham's." No! it was the Cheltenham Guide. I turned to the head of amusements — "Dress-ball at the Rooms every ——" some day or other — which of the seven I utterly forget; but it was the same as that which witnessed my first arrival in the small drawing-room of the —— Hotel.

"Thank Heaven!" said I to myself, as Bedos entered with my things, and was ordered immediately to have all in preparation for "the dress-ball at the Rooms," at the hour of half-past ten. The waiter entered with the bill. "Soups, chops, cutlets, steaks, roast joints, etc., etc.,—*lion, birds.*"

"Get some soup," said I, "a slice or two of lion, and half a dozen birds."

"Sir," said the solemn waiter, "you can't have less than a whole lion, and we have only two birds in the house."

"Pray," asked I, "are you in the habit of supplying your larder from Exeter 'Change, or do you breed lions here like poultry?"

"Sir," answered the grim waiter, never relaxing into a smile, "we have lions brought us from the country every day."

"What do you pay for them?" said I.

"About three-and-sixpence apiece, sir."

"Humph! market in Africa over-stocked," thought I. "Pray, how do you dress an animal of that description?"

"Roast and stuff him, sir, and serve him up with currant jelly."

"What! like a hare?"

"A lion *is* a hare, sir."

"What!"

"Yes, sir, it is a hare! — but we call it a lion because of the game laws."

"Bright discovery," thought I; "they have a new language in Cheltenham; nothing's like travelling to enlarge the mind. And the birds," said I, aloud, "are neither humming-birds nor ostriches, I suppose?"

"No, sir; they are partridges."

"Well, then, give me some soup, a cutlet, and a 'bird,' as you term it, and be quick about it."

"It shall be done with despatch," answered the pompous attendant, and withdrew.

Is there, in the whole course of this pleasant and varying life, which young gentlemen and ladies write verses to prove tame and sorrowful, — is there in the whole course of it, one half-hour really and genuinely disagreeable? — if so, it is the half-hour before dinner at a strange inn. Nevertheless, by the help of philosophy and the window, I managed to endure it with great patience; and, though I was famishing with hunger, I pretended the indifference of a sage, even when the dinner was at length announced. I coquetted a whole minute with my napkin before I attempted the soup, and I helped

myself to the potatory food with a slow dignity that must have perfectly won the heart of the solemn waiter. The soup was little better than hot water, and the sharp-sauced cutlet than leather and vinegar: howbeit, I attacked them with the vigour of an Irishman, and washed them down with a bottle of the worst liquor ever dignified with the *venerabile nomen* of claret. The bird was tough enough to have passed for an ostrich in miniature; and I felt its ghost hopping about the stomachic sepulchre to which I consigned it the whole of that evening, and a great portion of the next day, when a glass of Curaçoa laid it at rest.

After this splendid repast, I flung myself back on my chair, with the complacency of a man who has dined well, and dozed away the time till the hour of dressing.

"Now," thought I, as I placed myself before my glass, "shall I gently please or sublimely astonish the 'fashionables' of Cheltenham?—Ah, bah! the latter school is vulgar; Byron spoilt it. Don't put out that chain, Bedos; I wear—the black coat, waistcoat, and trousers. Brush my hair as much *out* of curl as you can, and give an air of graceful negligence to my *tout ensemble.*"

"Oui, monsieur, je comprends," answered Bedos.

I was soon dressed, for it is the *design* not the *execution* of all great undertakings which requires deliberation and delay. *Action* cannot be too prompt. A chair was called, and Henry Pelham was conveyed to the Rooms.

CHAPTER XL.

Now see, prepared to lead the sprightly dance,
The lovely nymphs, and well-dressed youths advance;
The spacious room receives its jovial guest,
And the floor shakes with pleasing weight oppressed.
Art of Dancing.

Page. His name, my lord, is Tyrrell. — *Richard III.*

Upon entering, I saw several heads rising and sinking to the tune of "Cherry ripe." A whole row of stiff necks, in cravats of the most unexceptionable length and breadth, were just before me. A tall thin young man, with dark wiry hair, brushed on one side, was drawing on a pair of white Woodstock gloves, and affecting to look round the room with the supreme indifference of *bon ton.*

"Ah, Ritson," said another young Cheltenhamian to him of the Woodstock gauntlets, "have n't you been dancing yet?"

"No, Smith, 'pon honour!" answered Mr. Ritson; "it is so overpoweringly hot: no fashionable man dances now; *it is n't the thing.*"

"Why," replied Mr. Smith, who was a good-natured-looking person, with a blue coat and brass buttons, and a gold pin in his neckcloth, "why, they dance at Almack's, don't they?"

"No, 'pon honour," murmured Mr. Ritson; "no, they just walk a quadrille or *spin a waltz,* as my friend, Lord Bobadob, calls it; nothing more; no, hang dancing, 't is *so* vulgar."

A stout, red-faced man, about thirty, with wet auburn hair, a marvellously fine waistcoat, and a badly-washed frill, now joined Messrs. Ritson and Smith.

"Ah, Sir Ralph," cried Smith, "how d' ye do? been hunting all day, I suppose?"

"Yes, old cock," replied Sir Ralph; "been after the brush till I am quite done up: such a glorious run! By G—, you

should have seen my gray mare, Smith; by G—, she 's a glorious fencer."

"You don't hunt, do you, Ritson?" interrogated Mr. Smith.

"Yes, I do," replied Mr. Ritson, affectedly playing with his Woodstock glove; "yes, but I only hunt in Leicestershire with my friend, Lord Bobadob; 't is not the thing to hunt anywhere else."

Sir Ralph stared at the speaker with mute contempt; while Mr. Smith, like the ass between the hay, stood balancing betwixt the opposing merits of the baronet and the beau. Meanwhile, a smiling, nodding, affected female thing, in ringlets and flowers, flirted up to the trio.

"Now, reely, Mr. Smith, you should deence; a feeshionable young man, like you; I don't know what the young leedies will say to you." And the fair seducer laughed bewitchingly.

"You are very good, Mrs. Dollimore," replied Mr. Smith, with a blush and a low bow; "but Mr. Ritson tells me it is not *the thing* to dance."

"Oh," cried Mrs. Dollimore, "but then he 's seech a naughty, conceited creature; don't follow his example, Meester Smith;" and again the good lady laughed immoderately.

"Nay, Mrs. Dollimore," said Mr. Ritson, passing his hand through his abominable hair, "you are too severe; but tell me, Mrs. Dollimore, is the Countess —— coming here?"

"Now, reely, Mr. Ritson, *you*, who are the pink of feeshion, ought to know better than I can; but I hear so."

"Do you know the countess?" said Mr. Smith, in respectful surprise, to Ritson.

"Oh, very well," replied the Coryphæus of Cheltenham, swinging his Woodstock glove to and fro; "I have often *danced* with her at Almack's."

"Is she a good deencer?" asked Mrs. Dollimore.

"Oh, capital," responded Mr. Ritson; "she 's such a nice genteel little figure."

Sir Ralph, apparently tired of this "feeshionable" conversation, swaggered away.

"Pray," said Mrs. Dollimore, "who is that geentleman?"

"Sir Ralph Rumford," replied Smith, eagerly, "a particular friend of mine at Cambridge."

"I wonder if he 's going to make a long steey?" said Mrs. Dollimore.

"Yes, I believe so," replied Mr. Smith, "if we make it agreeable to him."

"You must poositively introduce him to me," said Mrs. Dollimore.

"I will, with great pleasure," said the good-natured Mr. Smith.

"Is Sir Ralph *a man of fashion?*" inquired Mr. Ritson.

"He 's a baronet!" emphatically pronounced Mr. Smith.

"Ah!" replied Ritson, "but he may be a man of rank, without being a man of fashion."

"True," lisped Mrs. Dollimore.

"I don't know," replied Smith, with an air of puzzled wonderment, "but he has £7,000 a year."

"Has he indeed!" cried Mrs. Dollimore, surprised into her natural tone of voice; and at that moment, a young lady, ringleted and flowered like herself, joined her, and accosted her by the endearing appellation of "Mamma."

"Have you been dancing, my love?" inquired Mrs. Dollimore.

"Yes, ma; with Captain Johnson."

"Oh," said the mother, with a toss of her head; and giving her daughter a significant push, she walked away with her to another end of the room, to talk about Sir Ralph Rumford, and his seven thousand a year.

"Well!" thought I, "odd people these; let us enter a little farther into this savage country." In accordance with this reflection, I proceeded towards the middle of the room.

"Who 's that?" said Mr. Smith, in a loud whisper, as I passed him.

"'Pon honour," answered Ritson, "I don't know! but he 's a deuced neat-looking fellow."

"Thank you, Mr. Ritson," said my vanity; "you are not so offensive after all."

I paused to look at the dancers; a middle-aged, respectable-

looking gentlman was beside me. Common people, after they have passed forty, grow social. My neighbor hemmed twice, and made preparation for speaking. "I may as well encourage him," was my reflection; accordingly I turned round with a most good-natured expression of countenance.

"A fine room, this, sir," said the man immediately.

"Very," said I, with a smile, "and extremely well filled."

"Ah, sir," answered my neighbour, "Cheltenham is not as it used to be some fifteen years ago. I have seen as many as one thousand two hundred and fifty persons within these walls" (certain people are always so d—d particularizing); "ay, sir," pursued my *laudator temporis acti*, "and half the peerage here into the bargain."

"Indeed!" quoth I, with an air of surprise suited to the information I received; "but the society is very good still, is it not?"

"Oh, very *genteel*," replied the man, "but not so *dashing* as it used to be." (Oh! those two horrid words! low enough to suit even the author of "——.")

"Pray," asked I, glancing at Messrs. Ritson and Smith, "do you know who those gentlemen are?"

"Extremely well!" replied my neighbour; "the tall young man is Mr. Ritson; his mother has a house in Baker Street, and gives quite *elegant* parties. He 's a most *genteel* young man; but such an insufferable coxcomb."

"And the other?" said I.

"Oh! he 's a Mr. Smith! His father was an eminent brewer, and is lately dead, leaving each of his sons thirty thousand pounds; the young Smith is *a knowing hand*, and wants to spend his money with spirit. He has a great passion for '*high life*,' and *therefore* attaches himself much to Mr. Ritson, who is *quite that way inclined*."

"He could not have selected a better model," said I.

"True," rejoined my Cheltenham Asmodeus, with *naïve* simplicity; "but I hope he won't adopt his *conceit* as well as his *elegance*."

"I shall die," said I to myself, "if I talk with this fellow any longer," and I was just going to glide away, when a tall

stately dowager, with two lean, scraggy daughters, entered the room; I could not resist pausing to inquire who they were.

My friend looked at me with a very altered and disrespectful air at this interrogation. "*Who?*" said he, "why the Countess of Babbleton and her two daughters, the Honorable Lady Jane Babel, and the Honorable Lady Mary Babel. They are the great people of Cheltenham," pursued he, "and it 's *a fine thing* to get into their set."

Meanwhile Lady Babbleton and her two daughters swept up the room, bowing and nodding to the riven ranks on each side, who made their salutations with the most profound respect. My experienced eye detected in a moment that Lady Babbleton, in spite of her title and her stateliness, was exceedingly the reverse of good *ton*, and the daughters (who did not resemble the scrag of mutton, *but its ghost*) had an appearance of sour affability, which was as different from the manners of proper society as it possibly could be.

I wondered greatly who and what they were. In the eyes of the Cheltenhamians, they were *the* countess and her daughters; and any further explanation would have been deemed quite superfluous. Further explanation I was, however, determined to procure, and was walking across the room in profound meditation as to the method in which the discovery should be made, when I was startled by the voice of Sir Lionel Garrett: I turned round, and, to my inexpressible joy, beheld that worthy baronet.

"Bless me, Pelham," said he, "how delighted I am to see you. Lady Harriet, here 's your old favourite, Mr. Pelham."

Lady Harriet was all smiles and pleasure. "Give me your arm," said she; "I must go and speak to Lady Babbleton,—odious woman!"

"Do, my dear Lady Harriet," said I, "explain to me *what* Lady Babbleton was."

"Why — she was a milliner, and took in the late lord, who was an idiot. *Voilà tout!*"

"Perfectly satisfactory," replied I.

"Or, short and sweet, as Lady Babbleton would say," replied Lady Harriet, laughing.

"In antithesis to her daughters, who are long and sour."

"Oh, you satirist!" said the affected Lady Harriet (who was only three removes better than the Cheltenham countess); "but tell me, how long have you been at Cheltenham?"

"About four hours and a half!"

"Then you don't know any of the lions here?"

"None — except [I added to myself] the lion I had for dinner."

"Well, let me despatch Lady Babbleton, and I'll then devote myself to being your nomenclator."

We walked up to Lady Babbleton, who had already disposed of her daughters, and was sitting in solitary dignity at the end of the room.

"My dear Lady Babbleton," cried Lady Harriet, taking both the hands of the dowager, "I am so glad to see you, and how well you are looking; and your charming daughters, how are they? — sweet girls! — and how long have you been here?"

"We have only just come," replied the *ci-devant* milliner, half rising, and rustling her plumes in stately agitation, like a nervous parrot; "we must conform to modern *'ours*, Lady *Arriet*, though, for my part, I like the old-fashioned plan of dining early, and finishing one's gayeties before midnight; but I set the fashion of good *'ours* as well as I can. I think it's a duty *we* owe to society, Lady *Arriet*, to encourage morality by our own example. What else do we have rank for?" And, so saying, the counter-countess drew herself up with a most edifying air of moral dignity.

Lady Harriet looked at me, and perceiving that my eye said "go on," as plainly as eye could possibly speak, she continued, — "Which of the wells do you attend, Lady Babbleton?"

"All," replied the patronizing dowager. "I like to encourage the poor people here; I've no notion of being proud because one has a title, Lady *Arriet*."

"No," rejoined the worthy helpmate of Sir Lionel Garrett; "everybody talks of your condescension, Lady Babbleton; but are you not afraid of letting yourself down by going everywhere?"

"Oh," answered *the countess*, "I admit very few into my set *at home*, but I *go out promiscuously*;" and then, looking at me, she said, in a whisper, to Lady Harriet, "Who is that nice young gentleman?"

"Mr. Pelham," replied Lady Harriet, and, turning to me, formally introduced us to each other.

"Are you any relation," asked the dowager, "to Lady Frances Pelham?"

"Only her son," said I.

"Dear me," replied Lady Babbleton, "how odd; what a nice *elegant* woman she is? She does not go much out, does she? I don't often meet her."

"I should not think it likely that your ladyship did meet her much. She does not visit *promiscuously*."

"Every rank has its duty," said Lady Harriet, gravely; "your mother, Mr. Pelham, may confine her circle as much as she pleases; but the high rank of Lady Babbleton requires greater condescension; just as the Dukes of Sussex and Gloucester go to many places where you and I would not."

"Very true!" said the innocent dowager; "and that's a very sensible remark! Were you at Bath last winter, Mr. Pelham?" continued the countess, whose thoughts wandered from subject to subject in the most *rudderless* manner.

"No, Lady Babbleton, I was unfortunately at a less distinguished place."

"What was that?"

"Paris."

"Oh, indeed! I've never been abroad; I don't think persons of a certain rank should leave England; they should stay at home and encourage their own manufactories."

"Ah!" cried I, taking hold of Lady Babbleton's shawl, "what a pretty Manchester pattern this is."

"Manchester pattern!" exclaimed the petrified peeress; "why, it is real Cashmere; you don't think I wear anything English, Mr. Pelham?"

"I beg your ladyship ten thousand pardons. I am no judge of dress; but to return,—I am quite of your opinion, *that we*

ought to encourage our own manufactories, and not go abroad: but one cannot stay long on the Continent, even if one is decoyed there. One soon longs for home again."

"Very sensibly remarked," rejoined Lady Babbleton: "that 's what I call true patriotism and morality. I wish all the young men of the present day were like you. Oh, dear! — here 's a great favourite of mine coming this way, — Mr. Ritson! — do you know him? shall I introduce you?"

"Heaven forbid!" exclaimed I, frightened out of my wits and my manners. "Come, Lady Harriet, let us rejoin Sir Lionel;" and, "swift at the word," Lady Harriet retook my arm, nodded her adieu to Lady Babbleton, and withdrew with me to an obscurer part of the room.

Here we gave way to our laughter for some time, — "Is it possible!" exclaimed I, starting up, — "can that be Tyrrell?"

"What 's the matter with the man?" cried Lady Harriet.

I quickly recovered my presence of mind, and reseated myself. "Pray forgive me, Lady Harriet," said I; "but I think, nay, I am sure, I see a person I once met under very particular circumstances. Do you observe that dark man in deep mourning, who has just entered the room and is now speaking to Sir Ralph Rumford?"

"I do, it is Sir John Tyrrell!" replied Lady Harriet: "he only came to Cheltenham yesterday. His is a very singular history."

"What is it?" said I, eagerly.

"Why, he was the only son of a younger branch of the Tyrrells; a very old family, as the name denotes. He was a great deal in a certain *roué* set for some years, and was celebrated for his gallantries. His fortune was, however, perfectly unable to satisfy his expenses; he took to gambling, and lost the remains of his property. He went abroad, and used to be seen at the low gaming-houses at Paris, earning a very degraded and precarious subsistence; till, about three months ago, two persons, who stood between him and the title and estates of the family, died, and most unexpectedly he succeeded to both. They say that he was found in the most utter penury and distress, in a small cellar at Paris;

however that may be, he is now Sir John Tyrrell, with a very large income; and, in spite of a certain coarseness of manner, probably acquired by the low company he latterly kept, he is very much liked, and even admired, by the few good people in the society of Cheltenham."

At this instant Tyrrell passed us; he caught my eye, stopped short, and coloured violently. I bowed; he seemed undecided for a moment as to the course he should adopt; it was *but* for a moment. He returned my salutation with great appearance of cordiality; shook me warmly by the hand; expressed himself delighted to meet me; inquired where I was staying, and said he should certainly call upon me. With this promise he glided on, and was soon lost among the crowd.

"Where did you meet him?" said Lady Harriet.

"At Paris."

"What! was he in decent society there?"

"I don't know," said I. "Good night, Lady Harriet;" and, with an air of extreme lassitude, I took my hat, and vanished from that motley mixture of the *fashionably* low and the vulgarly *genteel!*

CHAPTER XLI.

> Full many a lady
> I have eyed with best regard, and many a time
> The harmony of their tongues hath unto bondage
> Drawn my too diligent eyes.
> But you, oh! you,
> So perfect and so peerless, are create
> Of every creature's best. — Shakspeare.

Thou wilt easily perceive, my dear reader, who hast been in my confidence throughout the whole of this history, and whom, though as yet thou hast cause to esteem me but lightly,

I already love as my familiar and my friend,—thou wilt easily conceive my surprise at meeting so unexpectedly with my old hero of the gambling-house. I felt indeed perfectly stunned at the shock of so singular a change in his circumstances since I had last met him. My thoughts reverted immediately to that scene, and to the mysterious connection between Tyrrell and Glanville. How would the latter receive the intelligence of his enemy's good fortune? Was his vengeance yet satisfied, or through what means could it now find vent?

A thousand thoughts similar to these occupied and distracted my attention till morning, when I summoned Bedos into the room to read me to sleep. He opened a play of Monsieur Delavigne's, and at the beginning of the second scene I was in the land of dreams.

I woke about two o'clock; dressed, sipped my chocolate, and was on the point of arranging my hat to the best advantage, when I received the following note:—

My dear Pelham,—*Me tibi commendo.* I heard this morning, at your hotel, that you were here; my heart was a house of joy at the intelligence. I called upon you two hours ago; but, like Antony, "you revel long o' nights." Ah, that I could add with Shakspeare, that you were "notwithstanding *up.*" I have just come from Paris, that *umbilicus terræ*, and my adventures since I saw you, for your private satisfaction, "because I love you, I will let you know;" but you must satisfy me with a meeting. Till you do, "the mighty gods defend you!"

Vincent.

The hotel from which Vincent dated this epistle was in the same street as my own caravansary, and to this hotel I immediately set off. I found my friend sitting before a huge folio, which he in vain endeavoured to persuade me that he seriously intended to read. We greeted each other with the greatest cordiality.

"But how," said Vincent, after the first warmth of welcome had subsided, "how shall I congratulate you upon your new honours? I was not prepared to find you grown from a *roué* into a senator.

"'In gathering votes you were not slack,
Now stand as tightly by your tack,
Ne'er show your lug an' fidge your back,
An' hum an' haw;
But raise your arm, an' tell your crack
Before them a'.'

So saith Burns; advice which, being interpreted, meaneth, that you must astonish the rats of St. Stephen's."

"Alas!" said I, "all one's clap-traps in that house must be baited."

"Nay, but a rat bites at any cheese, from Gloucester to Parmesan, and you can easily scrape up a bit of some sort. Talking of the House, do you see, by the paper, that the civic senator Alderman W—— is at Cheltenham?"

"I was not aware of it. I suppose he 's cramming speeches and turtle for the next season."

"How wonderfully," said Vincent, "your city dignities unloose the tongue; directly a man has been a mayor, he thinks himself qualified for a Tully at least. Faith, the Lord Mayor asked me one day, what was the Latin for spouting; and I told him, '*hippomanes*, or a raging humour in *mayors*.'"

After I had paid, through the medium of my risible muscles, due homage to this witticism of Vincent, he shut up his folio, called for his hat, and we sauntered down into the street.

"When do you go up to town?" asked Vincent.

"Not till my senatorial duties require me."

"Do you stay here till then?"

"As it pleases the gods. But, good heavens, Vincent, what a beautiful girl!"

Vincent turned. "O Dea certe," murmured he, and stopped.

The object of our exclamations was standing by a corner shop, apparently waiting for some one within. Her face, at the moment I first saw her, was turned full towards me. Never had I seen any countenance half so lovely. She was apparently about twenty; her hair was of the richest chestnut, and a golden light played through its darkness, as if a sunbeam had been caught in those luxuriant tresses, and was

striving in vain to escape. Her eyes were of light hazel, large, deep, and *shaded into softness* (to use a modern expression) by long and very dark lashes. Her complexion alone would have rendered her beautiful, it was so clear — so pure; the blood blushed beneath it like roses under a clear stream; if, in order to justify my simile, roses would have the complacency to grow in such a situation. Her nose was of that fine and accurate mould that one so seldom sees, except in the Grecian statues, which unites the clearest and most decided outline with the most feminine delicacy and softness: and the short curved arch which descended from thence to her mouth was so fine — so *airily* and exquisitely formed — that it seemed as if Love himself had modelled the bridge which led to his most beautiful and fragrant island. On the right side of the mouth was one dimple, which corresponded so exactly with every smile and movement of those rosy lips, that you might have sworn the shadow of each passed there; it was like the rapid changes of an April heaven reflected upon a valley. She was somewhat, but not much, taller than the ordinary height; and her figure, which united all the first freshness and youth of the girl with the more luxuriant graces of the woman, was rounded and finished so justly, that the eye could glance over the whole, without discovering the least harshness or unevenness, or atom to be added or subtracted. But over all these was a light, a glow, a pervading spirit, of which it is impossible to convey the faintest idea. You should have seen her by the side of a shaded fountain on a summer's day. You should have watched her amidst music and flowers, and she might have seemed to you like the fairy that presided over both. So much for poetical description; it is not my *forte!*

"What think you of her, Vincent?" said I.

"I say, with Theocritus, in his epithalamium of Helen —"

"Say no such thing," said I; "I will not have her presence profaned by any helps from your memory."

At that moment the girl turned round abruptly, and re-entered the stationer's shop, at the door of which she had been standing.

"Let us enter," said Vincent: "I want some sealing-wax."

I desired no second invitation: we marched into the shop. My Armida was leaning on the arm of an old lady. She blushed deeply when she saw us enter; and, as ill-luck would have it, the old lady concluded her purchases the moment after, and they withdrew.

> "Who had thought this clime had held
> A deity so unparalleled!"

justly observed my companion.

I made no reply. All the remainder of that day I was absent and reserved; and Vincent, perceiving that I no longer laughed at his jokes, nor smiled at his quotations, told me I was sadly changed for the worse, and pretended an engagement, to rid himself of an auditor so obtuse.

CHAPTER XLII.

Tout notre mal vient de ne pouvoir être seuls; de là le jeu, le luxe, la dissipation, le vin, les femmes, l'ignorance, la médisance, l'envie, l'oubli de soi-même et de Dieu. — La Bruyère.

The next day I resolved to call upon Tyrrell, seeing that he had not yet kept his promise of anticipating me, and being very desirous not to lose any opportunity of improving my acquaintance with him; accordingly I sent my valet to make inquiries as to his abode. I found that he lodged in the same hotel as myself; and having previously ascertained that he was at home, I was ushered by the head waiter into the gamester's apartment.

He was sitting by the fire in a listless yet thoughtful attitude. His muscular and rather handsome person was indued in a dressing-gown of rich brocade, thrown on with a slovenly *nonchalance*. His stockings were about his heels, his hair

was dishevelled, and the light, streaming through the half-drawn window-curtains, rested upon the gray flakes with which its darker luxuriance was interspersed; and the cross light in which he had the imprudence or misfortune to sit, fully developed the deep wrinkles which years and dissipation had planted round his eyes and mouth. I was quite startled at the *oldness* and haggardness of his appearance.

He rose gracefully enough when I was announced; and no sooner had the waiter retired than he came up to me, shook me warmly by the hand, and said, "Let me thank you *now* for the attention you formerly showed me, when I was less able to express my acknowledgments. I shall be proud to cultivate your intimacy."

I answered him in the same strain, and, in the course of conversation, made myself so entertaining that he agreed to spend the remainder of the day with me. We ordered our horses at three, and our dinner at seven; and I left him till the former were ready, in order to allow him time for his toilet.

During our ride we talked principally on general subjects, on the various differences of France and England, on horses, on wines, on women, on politics, on all things except that which had created our acquaintance. His remarks were those of a strong, ill-regulated mind, which had made experience supply the place of the reasoning faculties; there was a looseness in his sentiments, and a licentiousness in his opinions, which startled even me, used as I had been to rakes of all schools; his philosophy was of that species which thinks that the best maxim of wisdom is — to despise. Of men he spoke with the bitterness of hatred; of women, with the levity of contempt. France had taught him its debaucheries, but not the elegance which refines them: if his sentiments were low, the language in which they were clothed was meaner still; and that which makes the morality of the upper classes, and which no criminal is supposed to be hardy enough to reject,— that religion which has no scoffers, that code which has no impugners, *that honour* among gentlemen, which constitutes the moving principle of the society in which they live, he seemed

to imagine, even in its most fundamental laws, was an authority to which nothing but the inexperience of the young and the credulity of the romantic could accede.

Upon the whole, he seemed to me a "bold, bad man," with just enough of intellect to teach him to be a villain, without that higher degree which shows him that it is the worst course for his interest; and just enough of daring to make him indifferent to the dangers of guilt, though it was not sufficient to make him conquer and control them. For the rest, he loved trotting better than cantering, piqued himself on being manly, wore doeskin gloves, drank port wine *par préférence*, and considered beefsteaks and oyster-sauce as the most delicate dish in the bill of fare. I think now, reader, you have a tolerably good view of his character.

After dinner, when we were discussing the second bottle, I thought it would not be a bad opportunity to question him upon his acquaintance with Glanville. His countenance fell directly I mentioned that name. However, he rallied himself. "Oh," said he, "you mean the *soi-disant* Warburton. I knew him some years back; he was a poor silly youth, half mad, I believe, and particularly hostile to me, owing to some foolish disagreement when he was quite a boy."

"What was the cause?" said I.

"Nothing — nothing of any consequence," answered Tyrrell; and then added, with an air of coxcombry, "I believe I was more fortunate than he in a certain intrigue. Poor Glanville is a little romantic, you know. But enough of this: shall we go to the Rooms?"

"With pleasure," said I; and to the Rooms we went.

CHAPTER XLIII.

VETERES revocavit artes. — HORACE.

Since I came hither I have heard strange news. — *King Lear.*

Two days after my long conversation with Tyrrell, I called again upon that worthy. To my great surprise he had left Cheltenham. I then strolled to Vincent; I found him lolling on his sofa, surrounded, as usual, with books and papers.

"Come in, Pelham," said he, as I hesitated at the threshold, — "come in. I have been delighting myself with Plato all the morning; I scarcely know what it is that enchants us so much with the ancients. I rather believe, with Schlegel, that it is that air of perfect repose,— the stillness of a deep soul, which rests over their writings. Whatever would appear commonplace amongst us has with them I know not what of sublimity and pathos. Triteness seems the profundity of truth,— wildness, the daring of a luxuriant imagination. The fact is, that in spite of every fault, you see, through all, the traces of original thought; there is a contemplative grandeur in their sentiments which seems to have nothing borrowed in its meaning or its dress. Take, for instance, this fragment of Mimnermus on the shortness of life,— what subject can seem more tame? what less striking than the feelings he expresses? And yet, throughout every line, there is a melancholy depth and tenderness, which it is impossible to define. Of all English writers who partake the most of this spirit of conveying interest and strength to sentiments and subjects neither novel in themselves, nor adorned in their arrangement, I know none that equal Byron: it is indeed the chief beauty of that extraordinary poet. Examine 'Childe Harold' accurately, and you will be surprised to discover how very little of real depth or novelty there often is in the reflections which seem most deep and new. You are enchained by the

vague but powerful beauty of the style; the strong impress of originality which breathes throughout. Like the oracle of Dodona, he makes the forests his tablets, and writes his inspirations upon the leaves of the trees; but the source of that inspiration you cannot tell: it is neither the truth nor the beauty of his sayings which you admire, though you fancy that it is; it is the mystery which accompanies them."

"Pray," said I, "do you not imagine that one great cause of this spirit of which you speak, and which seems to be nothing more than a thoughtful method of expressing all things, even to trifles, was the great loneliness to which the ancient poets and philosophers were attached? I think (though I have not your talent for quoting) that Cicero calls 'the consideration of Nature the food of the mind,' and the mind which, in solitude, is confined necessarily to a few objects, meditates more closely upon those it embraces: the habit of this meditation enters and pervades the system, and whatever afterwards emanates from it is tinctured with the thoughtful and contemplative colours it has received."

"Wonderful!" cried Vincent; "how long have you learnt to read Cicero, and talk about the mind?"

"Ah," said I, "I am perhaps less ignorant than I affect to be: it is *now* my object to be a dandy; hereafter I may aspire to be an orator,—a wit, a scholar, or a Vincent. You will see then that there have been many odd quarters of an hour in my life less unprofitably wasted than you imagine."

Vincent rose in a sort of nervous excitement, and then reseating himself, fixed his dark bright eyes steadfastly upon me for some moments; his countenance all the while assuming a higher and graver expression than I had ever before seen it wear.

"Pelham," said he, at last, "it is for the sake of moments like these, when your better nature flashes out, that I have sought your society and your friendship. *I*, too, am not wholly what I appear: the world may yet see that Halifax was not the only statesman whom the pursuits of literature had only formed the better for the labours of business. Meanwhile, let me pass for the pedant, and the bookworm: like a sturdier

adventurer than myself, 'I bide my time.' Pelham, this will be a busy session; shall you prepare for it?"

"Nay," answered I, relapsing into my usual tone of languid affectation, "I shall have too much to do in attending to Stultz and Nugee and Tattersall and Baxter and a hundred other occupiers of spare time. Remember, this is my first season in London since my majority."

Vincent took up the newspaper with evident chagrin; however, he was too theoretically the man of the world long to show his displeasure. "Parr — Parr — again," said he; "how they stuff the journals with that name. Heaven knows, I venerate learning as much as any man; but I respect it for its uses, and not for itself. However, I will not quarrel with his reputation; it is but for a day. Literary men, who leave nothing but their name to posterity, have but a short twilight of posthumous renown. *À propos*, do you know my pun upon Parr and the major?"

"Not I," said I, "*Majora* canamus!"

"Why, Parr and I, and two or three more, were dining once at poor T. M——'s, the author of 'The Indian Antiquities.' Major ——, a great traveller, entered into a dispute with Parr about Babylon; the doctor got into a violent passion, and poured out such a heap of quotations on his unfortunate antagonist, that the latter, stunned by the clamour, and terrified by the Greek, was obliged to succumb. Parr turned triumphantly to me: 'What is your opinion, my lord,' said he; 'who is in the right?'

"'*Adversis* MAJOR — PAR *secundis*,'" answered I.

"Vincent," I said, after I had expressed sufficient admiration at his pun,—"Vincent, I begin to be weary of this life; I shall accordingly pack up my books and myself, and go to Malvern Wells, to live quietly till I think it time for London. After to-day you will therefore see me no more."

"I cannot," answered Vincent, "contravene so laudable a purpose, however I may be the loser." And, after a short and desultory conversation, I left him once more to the tranquil enjoyment of his Plato. That evening I went to Malvern, and there I remained in a monotonous state of

existence; dividing my time equally between my mind and my body, and forming myself into that state of contemplative reflection which was the object of Vincent's admiration in the writings of the ancients.

Just when I was on the point of leaving my retreat, I received intelligence which most materially affected my future prospects. My uncle, who had arrived at the sober age of fifty, without any apparent designs of matrimony, fell suddenly in love with a lady in his immediate neighborhood, and married her, after a courtship of three weeks.

"I should not," said my poor mother, very generously, in a subsequent letter, "so much have minded his marriage, if the lady had not thought proper to become in the family way; a thing which I do and always shall consider a most unwarrantable encroachment on your rights."

I will confess that, on first hearing this news, I experienced a bitter pang; but I reasoned it away. I was already under great obligations to my uncle, and I felt it a very unjust and ungracious assumption on my part, to affect anger at conduct I had no right to question, or mortification at the loss of pretensions I had so equivocal a privilege to form. A man of fifty has, *perhaps*, a right to consult his own happiness, almost as much as a man of thirty; and if he attracts by his choice the ridicule of those whom he has never obliged, it is at least from those persons he *has* obliged that he is to look for countenance and defence.

Fraught with these ideas, I wrote to my uncle a sincere and warm letter of congratulation. His answer was like himself, kind, affectionate, and generous; it informed me that he had already made over to me the annual sum of one thousand pounds; and that in case of his having a lineal heir, he had, moreover, settled upon me, after his death, two thousand a year. He ended by assuring me that his only regret at marrying a lady who in *all* respects was, above *all* women, calculated to make him happy, was his unfeigned reluctance to deprive me of a station which (he was pleased to say) I not only deserved, but should adorn.

Upon receiving this letter, I was sensibly affected with my

uncle's kindness; and so far from repining at his choice, I most heartily wished him every blessing it could afford him, even though an heir to the titles of Glenmorris were one of them.

I protracted my stay at Malvern some weeks longer than I had intended: the circumstance which had wrought so great a change in my fortune, wrought no less powerfully on my character. I became more thoughtfully and solidly ambitious. Instead of wasting my time in idle regrets at the station I had lost, I rather resolved to carve out for myself one still lofty and more universally acknowledged. I determined to exercise, to their utmost, the little ability and knowledge I possessed; and while the increase of income derived from my uncle's generosity furnished me with what was necessary for my luxury, I was resolved that it should not encourage me in the indulgence of my indolence.

In this mood and with these intentions I repaired to the metropolis.

CHAPTER XLIV.

CUM pulchris tunicis sumet nova consilia et spes. — HORACE.

And look always that they be shape,
What garment that thou shalt make
Of him that can best do
With all that pertaineth thereto. — *Romaunt of the Rose.*

How well I can remember the feelings with which I entered London, and took possession of the apartments prepared for me at Mivart's! A year had made a vast alteration in my mind: I had ceased to regard pleasure for its own sake; I rather coveted its enjoyments as the great sources of worldly distinction. I was not the less a coxcomb than heretofore, nor the less fastidious in my horses and my dress; but I

viewed these matters in a light wholly different from that in which I had hitherto regarded them. Beneath all the carelessness of my exterior, my mind was close, keen, and inquiring; and under all the affectations of foppery and the levity of manner, I veiled an ambition the most extensive in its objects and a resolution the most daring in the accomplishment of its means.

I was still lounging over my breakfast on the second morning of my arrival, when Mr. ——, the tailor, was announced.

"Good morning, Mr. Pelham; happy to see you returned. Do I disturb you too early; shall I wait on you again?"

"No, Mr. ——, I am ready to receive you. You may renew my measure."

"We are a very good figure, Mr. Pelham; very good figure," replied the Schneider, surveying me from head to foot, while he was preparing his measure; "we want a little assistance though; we must be padded well here; we must have our chest thrown out, and have an additional inch across the shoulders; we must live for effect in this world, Mr. Pelham; a *leetle* tighter round the waist, eh?"

"Mr. ——," said I, "you will take, first, my exact measure, and, secondly, my exact instructions. Have you done the first?"

"We are done now, Mr. Pelham," replied my *man-maker*, in a slow, solemn tone.

"You will have the goodness then to put no stuffing of any description in my coat; you will *not* pinch me an iota tighter across the waist than is natural to that part of my body; and you will please, in your infinite mercy, to leave me as much after the fashion in which God made me as you possibly can."

"But, sir, we *must* be padded; we are much too thin; all the gentlemen in the Life Guards are padded, sir."

"Mr. ——," answered I, "you will please to speak of *us* with a separate, and not a collective pronoun; and you will let me for once have my clothes such as a gentleman, who, I beg of you to understand, is not a Life Guardsman, can wear without being mistaken for a Guy Fawkes on the fifth of November."

Mr. —— looked very discomfited: "We shall not be liked, sir, when we are made; we sha'n't, I assure you. I will call on Saturday at eleven o'clock. Good morning, Mr. Pelham; we shall never be done justice to if we do not live for effect; good morning, Mr. Pelham."

And here, as I am weary of tailors, let me reflect a little upon that divine art of which they are the professors. Alas, for the instability of all human sciences! A few short months ago, in the first edition of this memorable work, I laid down rules for costume, the value of which fashion begins already to destroy. The thoughts which I shall now embody shall be out of the reach of that great innovator, and applicable not to one age, but to all. To the sagacious reader, who has already discovered what portions of this work are writ in irony, what in earnest, I fearlessly commit these maxims; beseeching him to believe, with Sterne, that, "everything is big with jest, and has wit in it, and instruction too,—if we can but find it out!"

MAXIMS.

I. — Do not require your dress so much to fit as to adorn you. Nature is not to be copied, but to be exalted by art. Apelles blamed Protogenes for being *too* natural.

II. — Never in your dress altogether desert that taste which is general. The world considers eccentricity in great things genius; in small things, folly.

III. — Always remember that you dress to fascinate others, not yourself.

IV. — Keep your mind free from all violent affections at the hour of the toilet. A philosophical serenity is perfectly necessary to success. Helvetius says justly, that our errors arise from our passions.

V. — Remember that none but those whose courage is unquestionable can venture to be effeminate. It was only in the field that the Spartans were accustomed to use perfumes and curl their hair.

VI. — Never let the finery of chains and rings seem *your own* choice; that which naturally belongs to women should appear only worn for their sake. We dignify foppery when we invest it with a sentiment.

VII. — To *win* the affection of your mistress, appear negligent in your costume; to *preserve* it, assiduous: the first is a sign of the *passion* of love; the second, of its *respect.*

VIII. — A man must be a profound calculator to be a consummate dresser. One must not dress the same whether one goes to a minister or a mistress, an avaricious uncle or an ostentatious cousin: there is no diplomacy more subtle than that of dress.

IX. — Is the great man whom you would conciliate a coxcomb? — go to him in a waistcoat like his own. "Imitation," says the author of "Lacon," "is the sincerest flattery."

X. — The handsome may be showy in dress; the plain should study to be unexceptionable: just as in great men we look for something to admire; in ordinary men we ask for nothing to forgive.

XI. — There is a study of dress for the aged as well as for the young. Inattention is no less indecorous in one than the other: we may distinguish the taste appropriate to each by the reflection that youth is made to be loved; age, to be respected.

XII. — A fool may dress gaudily, but a fool cannot dress well: for to dress well requires judgment; and Rochefoucauld says with truth, "On est quelquefois un sot avec de l'esprit, mais on ne l'est jamais avec du jugement."

XIII. — There may be more pathos in the fall of a collar or the curl of a lock than the shallow think for. Should we be so apt as we are now to compassionate the misfortunes and to forgive the insincerity of Charles I., if his pictures had portrayed him in a bob-wig and a pig-tail? Vandyke was a greater sophist than Hume.

XIV. — The most graceful principle of dress is neatness: the most vulgar is preciseness.

XV. — Dress contains the two codes of morality, — private and public. Attention is the duty we owe to others; cleanliness that which we owe to ourselves.

XVI. — Dress so that it may never be said of you, "What a well-dressed man!" — but, "What a gentlemanlike man!"

XVII. — Avoid many colours; and seek, by some one prevalent and quiet tint, to sober down the others. Apelles used only four colours, and always subdued those which were more florid by a darkening varnish.

XVIII. — Nothing is superficial to a deep observer. It is in trifles that the mind betrays itself. "In what part of that letter," said a king to the wisest of living diplomatists, "did you discover irresolution?" "In its *n's* and *g's*!" was the answer.

XIX. — A very benevolent man will never shock the feelings of others by an excess either of inattention or display; you may doubt, therefore, the philanthropy both of a sloven and a fop.

XX. — There is an indifference to please in a stocking down at heel; but there may be malevolence in a diamond ring.

XXI. — Inventions in dressing should resemble Addison's definition of fine writing, and consist of "refinements which are natural, without being obvious."

XXII. — He who esteems trifles for themselves is a trifler; he who esteems them for the conclusions to be drawn from them, or the advantage to which they can be put, is a philosopher.

CHAPTER XLV.

TANTÔT, Monseigneur le Marquis à cheval —
Tantôt, Monsieur du Mazin de bout!
L'Art de se Promener à Cheval.

MY cabriolet was at the door, and I was preparing to enter, when I saw a groom managing, with difficulty, a remarkably fine and spirited horse. As, at that time, I was chiefly occupied with the desire of making as perfect a stud as my fortune

would allow, I sent my cab-boy (*vulgo* Tiger) to inquire of the groom, whether the horse was to be sold and to whom it belonged.

"It was not to be disposed of," was the answer, "and it belonged to Sir Reginald Glanville."

The name thrilled through me; I drove after the groom, and inquired Sir Reginald Glanville's address. His house, the groom informed me, was at No. —— Pall Mall. I resolved to call that day; but, as the groom said that he was rarely at home till late in the afternoon, I drove first to Lady Roseville's to talk about Almack's and the *beau monde*, and be initiated into the newest scandal and satire of the day.

Lady Roseville was at home: I found the room half full of women; the beautiful countess was one of the few persons extant who admit people of a morning. She received me with marked kindness. Seeing that ——, who was esteemed among his friends the handsomest man of the day, had risen from his seat, next to Lady Roseville, in order to make room for me, I negligently and quietly dropped into it, and answered his grave and angry stare at my presumption with my very sweetest and most condescending smile. Heaven be praised, the handsomest man of the day is never the chief object in the room, when Henry Pelham and his guardian angel, termed by his enemies his *self-esteem*, once enter it.

I rattled on through a variety of subjects till Lady Roseville at last said, laughingly, "I see, Mr. Pelham, that you have learned, at least, the art of making the *frais* of the conversation since your visit to Paris."

"I understand you," answered I; "you mean that I talk too much; it is true — I own the offence — nothing is so unpopular. Even I, the civilest, best-natured, most unaffected person in all Europe, am almost disliked, positively disliked, for that sole and simple crime. Ah! the most beloved man in society is that deaf and dumb person, *comment s'appelle-t-il?*"

"Yes," said Lady Roseville, "Popularity is a goddess best worshipped by negatives; and the fewer claims one has to be admired, the more pretensions one has to be beloved."

"Perfectly true, in general," said I; "for instance, I make the rule, and you the exception. I, a perfect paragon, am hated because I am one; you, a perfect paragon, are idolized in spite of it. But tell me, what literary news is there? I am tired of the trouble of idleness, and, in order to enjoy a little dignified leisure, intend to set up as a *savant*."

"Oh, Lady C—— —— is going to write a 'Commentary on Ude;' and Madame de Genlis a 'Proof of the Apocrypha.' The Duke of N——e is publishing a 'Treatise on Toleration;' and Lord L——, an 'Essay on Self-knowledge.' As for news more remote, I hear that the Dey of Algiers is finishing an 'Ode to Liberty,' and the College of Caffraria preparing a volume of 'Voyages to the North Pole!'"

"Now," said I, "if I retail this information with a serious air, I will lay a wager that I find plenty of believers: for fiction, uttered solemnly, is much more like probability than truth uttered doubtingly; else how do the priests of Bramah and Mahomet live?"

"Ah! now you grow too profound, Mr. Pelham!"

"*C'est vrai;* but—"

"Tell me," interrupted Lady Roseville, "how it happens that you, who talk eruditely enough upon matters of erudition, should talk so lightly upon matters of levity?"

"Why," said I, rising to depart, "very great minds are apt to think that all which they set *any* value upon is of equal importance. Thus Hesiod—who, you know, was a capital poet, though rather an imitator of Shenstone—tells us that God bestowed valour on some men, and on others a genius for dancing. It was reserved for me, Lady Roseville, to unite the two perfections. Adieu!"

"Thus," said I, when I was once more alone,—"thus do we 'play the fools with the time,' until Fate brings that which is better than folly; and, standing idly upon the sea-shore, till we can catch the favouring wind which is to waft the vessel of our destiny to enterprise and fortune, amuse ourselves with the weeds and the pebbles which are within our reach!"

CHAPTER XLVI.

> THERE was a youth who, as with toil and travel,
> Had grown quite weak and gray before his time;
> Nor any could the restless grief unravel
> Which burned within him, withering up his prime,
> And goading him, like fiends, from land to land.
>
> P. B. SHELLEY.

FROM Lady Roseville's I went to Glanville's house. He was at home. I was ushered into a beautiful apartment, hung with rich damask, and interspersed with a profusion of mirrors. Beyond, to the right of this room, was a small closet, fitted up with books. This room, evidently a favourite retreat, was adorned at close intervals with girandoles of silver and mother-of-pearl; the handles of the doors were of the same material.

This closet opened upon a spacious and lofty saloon, the walls of which were covered with the masterpieces of Flemish and Italian art. Through this apartment I was led, by the obsequious and bowing valet, into a fourth room, in which, negligently robed in his dressing-gown, sat Reginald Glanville. "Good heavens," thought I, as I approached him, "can this be the man who made his residence, by choice, in a miserable hovel, exposed to all the damps, winds, and vapours that the prolific generosity of an English heaven ever begot?"

Our meeting was cordial in the extreme. Glanville, though still pale and thin, appeared in much better health than I had yet seen him since our boyhood. He was, or affected to be, in the most joyous spirits; and when his blue eye lighted up, in answer to the merriment of his lips, and his noble and glorious cast of countenance shone out, as if it had never been clouded by grief or passion, I thought, as I looked at him, that I had never seen so perfect a specimen of masculine beauty, at once physical and intellectual.

"My dear Pelham," said Glanville, "let us see a great deal of each other; I live very much alone; I have an excellent cook sent me over from France by the celebrated gourmand Maréchal de ——. I dine every day exactly at eight, and never accept an invitation to dine elsewhere. My table is always laid for three, and you will, therefore, be sure of finding a dinner here every day you have no better engagement. What think you of my taste in pictures?"

"I have only to say," answered I, "that since I am so often to dine with you, I hope your taste in wines will be one half as good."

"We are all," said Glanville, with a faint smile, "we are all, in the words of the true old proverb, 'children of a larger growth.' Our first toy is love; our second, display, according as our ambition prompts us to exert it. Some place it in horses; some in honours; some in feasts; and some — *voici un exemple* — in furniture or pictures. So true it is, Pelham, that our earliest longings are the purest: in love, we covet goods for the sake of the one beloved; in display, for our own: thus, our first stratum of mind produces fruit for others; our second becomes niggardly, and bears only sufficient for ourselves. But enough of my morals; will you drive me out, if I dress quicker than you ever saw man dress before?"

"No," said I; "for I make it a rule never to drive out a badly-dressed friend; take time, and I will let you accompany me."

"So be it, then. Do you ever read? If so, my books are made to be opened, and you may toss them over while I am at my toilet. Look; here are two works, — one of poetry, one on the Catholic question, — both dedicated to me. Seymour, my waistcoat. See what it is to furnish a house differently from other people; one becomes a *bel esprit*, and a Mecænas immediately. Believe me, if you are rich enough to afford it, that there is no passport to fame like eccentricity. Seymour, my coat. I am at your service, Pelham. Believe hereafter that one may dress well in a short time!"

"*One* may do it, but not *two; allons!*"

I observed that Glanville was dressed in the deepest mourn-

ing, and imagined, from that circumstance, and his accession to the title I heard applied to him for the first time, that his father was only just dead. In this opinion I was soon undeceived. He had been dead for some years. Glanville spoke to me of his family. "To my mother," said he, "I am particularly anxious to introduce you: of my sister I say nothing; I expect you to be surprised with her. I love her more than anything on earth *now;*" and as Glanville said this, a paler shade passed over his face.

We were in the park; Lady Roseville passed us; we both bowed to her; as she returned our greeting, I was struck with the deep and sudden blush which overspread her countenance. "That can't be for *me?*" thought I. I looked towards Glanville; his countenance had recovered its serenity, and was settled into its usual proud but not displeasing calmness of expression.

"Do you know Lady Roseville well?" said I.

"Very," answered Glanville, laconically, and changed the conversation. As we were leaving the park, through Cumberland Gate, we were stopped by a blockade of carriages; a voice, loud, harsh, and vulgarly *accented*, called out to Glanville by his name. I turned, and saw Thornton.

"For Heaven's sake, Pelham, drive on," cried Glanville; "let me, for once, escape that atrocious plebeian."

Thornton was crossing the road towards us; I waved my hand to him civilly enough (for I never cut anybody), and drove rapidly through the other gate, without appearing to notice his design of speaking to us.

"Thank Heaven!" said Glanville, and sank back in a revery, from which I could not awaken him, till he was set down at his own door.

When I returned to Mivart's, I found a card from Lord Dawton, and a letter from my mother.

My dear Henry [began the letter], — Lord Dawton having kindly promised to call upon you personally with this note, I cannot resist the opportunity that promise affords me of saying how desirous I am that you should cultivate his acquaintance. He is, you know, among the

most prominent leaders of the Opposition: and should the Whigs, by any possible chance, ever come into power, he would have a great chance of becoming prime minister. I trust, however, that you will not adopt that side of the question. The Whigs are a horrid set of people (*politically* speaking), vote for the Roman Catholics, and never get into place; they give very good dinners, however, and until you have decided upon your politics, you may as well make the most of them. I hope, by the by, that you will see a great deal of Lord Vincent: every one speaks highly of his talents; and only two weeks ago, he said publicly that he thought you the most promising young man and the most naturally clever person he had ever met. I hope that you will be attentive to your parliamentary duties; and — oh, Henry, be sure that you see Cartwright, the dentist, as soon as possible.

I intend hastening to London three weeks earlier than I had intended, in order to be useful to you. I have written already to dear Lady Roseville, begging her to *introduce* you at Lady C——'s and Lady ——, the only places worth going to at present. They tell me there is a horrid, vulgar, ignorant book come out about ——. As you ought to be well versed in modern literature, I hope you will read it, and give me your opinion. Adieu, my dear Henry, ever your affectionate mother,

FRANCES PELHAM.

I was still at my solitary dinner, when the following note was brought me from Lady Roseville: —

DEAR MR. PELHAM, — Lady Frances wishes Lady C—— to be made acquainted with you; this is her night, and I therefore enclose you a card. As I dine at —— House, I shall have an opportunity of making your *éloge* before your arrival. Yours sincerely,

C. ROSEVILLE.

"I wonder," thought I, as I made my toilet, "whether or not Lady Roseville is enamoured of her new correspondent." I went very early, and before I retired my vanity was undeceived. Lady Roseville was playing at *écarté* when I entered. She beckoned me to approach. I did. Her antagonist was Mr. Bedford, a natural son of the Duke of Shrewsbury and one of the best-natured and best-looking dandies about town: there was, of course, a great crowd round the table. Lady

Roseville played incomparably; bets were high in her favour. Suddenly her countenance changed; her hand trembled; her presence of mind forsook her. She lost the game. I looked up and saw just opposite to her, but apparently quite careless and unmoved, Reginald Glanville. We had only time to exchange nods, for Lady Roseville rose from the table, took my arm, and walked to the other end of the room, in order to introduce me to my hostess.

I spoke to her a few words, but she was absent and inattentive; my penetration required no further proof to convince me that she was not wholly insensible to the attractions of Glanville. Lady —— was as civil and silly as the generality of Lady Blanks are; and, feeling very much bored, I soon retired to an obscurer corner of the room. Here Glanville joined me.

"It is but seldom," said he, "that I come to these places; to-night my sister persuaded me to venture forth."

"Is she here?" said I.

"She is," answered he; "she has just gone into the refreshment-room with my mother; and when she returns I will introduce you."

While Glanville was yet speaking, three middle-aged ladies, who had been talking together with great vehemence for the last ten minutes, approached us.

"Which is he?—which is he?" said two of them in no inaudible accents.

"This," replied the third; and coming up to Glanville, she addressed him, to my great astonishment, in terms of the most hyperbolical panegyric.

"Your work is wonderful! wonderful!" said she.

"Oh! quite—quite!" echoed the other two.

"I can't say," recommenced the Coryphæa, "that I like the moral,—at least not quite; no, not quite."

"Not quite," repeated her coadjutrices.

Glanville drew himself up with his most stately air, and, after three profound bows, accompanied by a smile of the most unequivocal contempt, he turned on his heel, and sauntered away.

"Did your grace *ever* see such a bear?" said one of the echoes.

"Never," said the duchess, with a mortified air; "but I will have him yet. How handsome he is for an author!"

I was descending the stairs in the last state of *ennui*, when Glanville laid his hand on my shoulder.

"Shall I take you home?" said he, "my carriage has just drawn up."

I was too glad to answer in the affirmative.

"How long have you been an author?" said I, when we were seated in Glanville's carriage.

"Not many days," he replied. "I have tried one resource after another,—all—all in vain. Oh, God! that for me there *could* exist such a blessing as *fiction*! Must I ever be the martyr of one burning, lasting, indelible *truth!*"

Glanville uttered these words with a peculiar wildness and energy of tone; he then paused abruptly for a minute, and continued with an altered voice,—

"Never, my dear Pelham, be tempted by any inducement into the pleasing errors of print; from that moment you are public property; and the last monster at Exeter 'Change has more liberty than you; but here we are at Mivart's. Adieu; I will call on you to-morrow, if my wretched state of health will allow me." And with these words we parted.

CHAPTER XLVII.

Ambition is a lottery, where, however uneven the chances, there are *some* prizes; but in dissipation *every* one draws a blank.—*Letters of Stephen Montague.*

The season was not far advanced before I grew heartily tired of what are *nicknamed* its gayeties; I shrank, by rapid degrees, into a very small orbit, from which I rarely moved.

I had already established a certain reputation for eccentricity, fashion, and, to my great astonishment, also for talent; and my pride was satisfied with finding myself universally run after, whilst I indulged my inclinations by rendering myself universally scarce. I saw much of Vincent, whose varied acquirements and great talents became more and more perceptible, both as my own acquaintance with him increased, and as the political events with which that year was pregnant called forth their exertion and display. I went occasionally to Lady Roseville's, and was always treated rather as a long-known friend than an ordinary acquaintance; nor did I undervalue this distinction, for it was part of her pride to render her house not only as splendid, but as agreeable, as her command over society enabled her to effect.

At the House of Commons my visits would have been duly paid, but for one trifling occurrence, upon which, as it is a very sore subject, I shall dwell as briefly as possible. I had scarcely taken my seat, before I was forced to relinquish it. My unsuccessful opponent, Mr. Lufton, preferred a petition against me, for what he called undue means. Heaven knows what he meant: I am sure the House did not; for they turned me out, and declared Mr. Lufton duly elected.

Never was there such a commotion in the Glenmorris family before. My uncle was seized with the gout in his stomach, and my mother shut herself up with Tremaine and one china monster for a whole week. As for me, though I writhed at heart, I bore the calamity philosophically enough in external appearance; nor did I the less busy myself in political matters: with what address and success, good or bad, I endeavoured to supply the loss of my parliamentary influence, the reader will see, when it suits the plot of this history to touch upon such topics.

Glanville I saw continually. When in tolerable spirits, he was an entertaining though never a frank nor a communicative companion. His conversation then was lively, yet without wit, and sarcastic, though without bitterness. It abounded also in philosophical reflections and terse maxims, which always brought improvement, or, at the worst, allowed discus-

sion. He was a man of even vast powers,—of deep thought; of luxuriant, though dark imagination; and of great miscellaneous, though, perhaps, ill-arranged erudition. He was fond of paradoxes in reasoning, and supported them with a subtlety and strength of mind, which Vincent, who admired him greatly, told me he had never seen surpassed. He was subject, at times, to a gloom and despondency, which seemed almost like aberration of intellect. At those hours he would remain perfectly silent, and apparently forgetful of my presence and of every object around him.

It was only then, when the play of his countenance was vanished and his features were still and set, that you saw in their full extent the dark and deep traces of premature decay. His cheek was hollow and hueless, his eye dim, and of that visionary and glassy aspect which is never seen but in great mental or bodily disease, and which, according to the superstitions of some nations, implies a mysterious and unearthly communion of the soul with the beings of another world. From these trances he would sometimes start abruptly, and renew any conversation broken off before, as if wholly unconscious of the length of his revery. At others, he would rise slowly from his seat, and retire into his own apartment, from which he never emerged during the rest of the day.

But the reader must bear in mind that there was nothing artificial or affected in his musings, of whatever complexion they might be; nothing like the dramatic brown studies, and quick starts, which young gentlemen, in love with Lara and Lord Byron, are apt to practise. There never, indeed, was a character that possessed less cant of any description. His work, which was a singular, wild tale,—of mingled passion and reflection,—was, perhaps, of too original, certainly of too abstract a nature, to suit the ordinary novel-readers of the day. It did not acquire popularity for itself, but it gained great reputation for the author. It also inspired every one who read it with a vague and indiscribable interest to see and know the person who had composed so singular a work.

This interest he was the first to laugh at and to disappoint. He shrank from all admiration and from all sympathy. At the moment when a crowd assembled round him and every ear was bent to catch the words, which came alike from so beautiful a lip and so strange and imaginative a mind, it was his pleasure to utter some sentiment totally different from his written opinions and utterly destructive of the sensation he had excited. But it was very rarely that he exposed himself to these "trials of an author." He went out little to any other house but Lady Roseville's, and it was seldom more than once a week that he was seen even there. Lonely, and singular in mind and habits, he lived in the world like a person occupied by a separate object and possessed of a separate existence from that of his fellow-beings. He was luxurious and splendid, beyond all men, in his habits rather than his tastes. His table groaned beneath a weight of silver, too costly for the daily service even of a prince; but he had no pleasure in surveying it. His wines and viands were of the most exquisite description; but he scarcely tasted them. Yet, what may seem inconsistent, he was averse to all ostentation and show in the eyes of others. He admitted very few into his society; no one so intimately as myself. I never once saw more than three persons at his table. He seemed, in his taste for the arts, in his love of literature, and his pursuit after fame, to be, as he himself said, eternally endeavouring to forget and eternally brought back to remembrance.

"I pity that man, even more than I admire him," said Vincent to me, one night when we were walking home from Glanville's house. "His is, indeed, the disease *nulla medicabilis herba*. Whether it is the past or the present that afflicts him, whether it is the memory of past evil or the satiety of present good, he has taken to his heart the bitterest philosophy of life. He does not reject its blessings; he gathers them around him: but as a stone gathers moss,—cold, hard, unsoftened by the freshness and the greenness which surround it. As a circle can only touch a circle in one place, everything that life presents to him, wherever it comes from—to whatever portion of his soul it is applied—can find but one

point of contact; and that is the soreness of affliction; whether it is the *oblivio* or the *otium* that he requires, he finds equally that he is forever in want of one treasure,—'neque gemmis neque purpura venale nec auro.'"

CHAPTER XLVIII.

Mons. Jourdain. Êtes-vous fou de l'aller quereller—lui qui entend la tierce et la quarte, et qui sait tuer un homme par raison démonstrative?

Le Maître à Danser. Je me moque de sa raison démonstrative, de sa tierce et de sa quarte.—MOLIÈRE.

"HOLLO, my good friend; how are you?—d—d glad to see you in England," vociferated a loud, clear, good-humoured voice, one cold morning, as I was shivering down Brook Street into Bond Street. I turned and beheld Lord Dartmore, of "Rocher de Cancale" memory. I returned his greeting with the same cordiality with which it was given; and I was forthwith saddled with Dartmore's arm, and dragged up Bond Street, into that borough of all noisy, riotous, unrefined good fellows, yclept ——'s Hotel.

Here we were soon plunged into a small, low apartment, which Dartmore informed me was his room, and which was crowded with a score of the most stalwart youths that I ever saw out of a marching regiment.

Dartmore was still gloriously redolent of Oxford; his companions were all extracts from Christchurch; and his favourite occupations were boxing and hunting, scenes at the Fives' Courts, nights in the Cider Cellar, and mornings at Bow Street. Figure to yourself a fitter companion for the hero and writer of these adventures! The table was covered with boxing-gloves, single-sticks, two ponderous pair of dumb-bells, a large pewter-pot of porter, and four foils, one snapped in the middle.

"Well," cried Dartmore, to two strapping youths, with their coats off, "which was the conqueror?"

"Oh, it is not yet decided," was the answer; and forthwith the bigger one hit the lesser a blow with his boxing-glove, heavy enough to have felled Ulysses, who, if I recollect aright, was rather "*a game blood*" in such encounters.

This slight salute was forthwith the prelude to an encounter, which the whole train crowded round to witness; I, among the rest, pretending an equal ardour, and an equal interest, and hiding, like many persons in a similar predicament, a most trembling spirit beneath a most valorous exterior.

When the match (which terminated in favour of the lesser champion) was over, "Come, Pelham," said Dartmore, "let me take up the gloves with you."

"You are too good!" said I, for the first time using my drawing-room drawl. A wink and a grin went round the room.

"Well, then, will you fence with Staunton or play at single-stick with me?" said the short, thick, bullying, impudent, vulgar Earl of Calton.

"Why," answered I, "I am a poor hand at the foils, and a still worse at the sticks; but I have no objection to exchange a cut or two at the latter with Lord Calton."

"No, no!" said the good-natured Dartmore;—"no! Calton is the best stick-player I ever knew;" and then whispering me he added, "and the hardest hitter; and he never spares, either."

"Really," said I aloud, in my most affected tone, "it is a great pity, for I am excessively delicate; but, as I said I would engage him, I don't like to retract. Pray let me look at the hilt: I hope the basket is strong; I would not have my knuckles rapped for the world; now for it. I'm in a deuced fright, Dartmore;" and so saying, and inwardly chuckling at the universal pleasure depicted in the countenances of Calton and the bystanders, who were all rejoiced at the idea of the "dandy being drubbed," I took the stick, and pretended great awkwardness and lack of grace in the position I chose.

Calton placed himself in the most scientific attitude, assuming at the same time an air of *hauteur* and *nonchalance* which seemed to call for the admiration it met.

"Do we allow hard hitting?" said I.

"Oh! by all means," answered Calton, eagerly.

"Well," said I, settling my own *chapeau*, "had not you better put on your hat?"

"Oh, no," answered Calton, imperiously; "I can take pretty good care of my head;" and with these words we commenced.

I remained at first nearly upright, not availing myself in the least of my superiority in height, and only acting on the defensive. Calton played well enough for a gentleman; but he was no match for one who had, at the age of thirteen, beat the Life Guardsmen at Angelo's. Suddenly, when I had excited a general laugh at the clumsy success with which I warded off a most rapid attack of Calton's, I changed my position, and keeping Calton at arm's length till I had driven him towards a corner, I took advantage of a haughty imprudence on his part, and, by a common enough move in the game, drew back from a stroke aimed at my limbs, and suffered the whole weight of my weapon to fall so heavily upon his head, that I felled him to the ground in an instant.

I was sorry for the severity of the stroke the moment after it was inflicted; but never was punishment more deserved. We picked up the discomfited hero, and placed him on a chair to recover his senses; meanwhile I received the congratulations of the conclave with a frank alteration of manner which delighted them; and I found it impossible to get away till I had promised to dine with Dartmore and spend the rest of the evening in the society of his friends.

CHAPTER XLIX.

HEROES mischievously gay,
Lords of the street and terrors of the way,
Flush'd as they are with folly, youth, and wine.
JOHNSON: *London.*

Hol. Novi hominem tanquam te; his humour is lofty, his discourse peremptory, his tongue filed, his eye ambitious, his gait majestical, and his general behaviour vain, ridiculous, and thrasonical. — SHAKSPEARE.

I WENT a little after seven o'clock to keep my dinner engagement at ——'s; for very young men are seldom unpunctual at dinner. We sat down, six in number, to a repast at once incredibly bad and ridiculously extravagant, — turtle without fat, venison without flavour, champagne with the taste of a gooseberry, and hock with the properties of a pomegranate.[1] Such is the constant habit of young men; they think anything expensive is necessarily good, and they purchase poison at a dearer rate than the most *medicine-loving* hypochondriac in England!

Of course, all the knot declared the dinner was superb; called in the master to eulogize him in person; and made him, to his infinite dismay, swallow a bumper of his own hock. Poor man! they mistook his reluctance for his diffidence, and forced him to wash it away in another potation. With many a wry face of grateful humility, he left the room, and we then proceeded to pass the bottle with the *suicidal* determination of defeated Romans. You may imagine that we were not long in arriving at the devoutly-wished-for consummation of comfortable inebriety; and with our eyes reeling, our cheeks burning, and our brave spirits full ripe for a quarrel, we sallied out at eleven o'clock, vowing death, dread, and destruction to all the sober portion of his Majesty's subjects.

[1] Which is *not* an astringent fruit.

We came to a dead halt in Arlington Street, which, as it was the quietest spot in the neighbourhood, we deemed a fitting place for the arrangement of our forces. Dartmore, Staunton (a tall, thin, well-formed, silly youth), and myself, marched first, and the remaining three followed. We gave each other the most judicious admonitions as to propriety of conduct, and then, with a shout that alarmed the whole street, we renewed our way. We passed on safely enough till we got to Charing Cross, having only been thrice upbraided by the watchmen, and once threatened by two carmen of prodigious size, to whose wives or sweethearts we had, to our infinite peril, made some gentle overtures. When, however, we had just passed the Opera Colonnade, we were accosted by a bevy of buxom Cyprians, as merry and as drunk as ourselves. We halted for a few minutes in the midst of the kennel, to confabulate with our new friends, and a very amicable and intellectual conversation ensued. Dartmore was an adept in the art of slang, and he found himself fairly matched by more than one of the fair and gentle creatures by whom we were surrounded. Just, however, as we were all in high glee, Staunton made a trifling discovery, which turned the merriment of the whole scene into strife, war, and confusion. A bouncing lass, whose hands were as ready as her charms, had quietly helped herself to a watch which Staunton wore, *à la mode*, in his waistcoat pocket. Drunken as the youth was at that time, and dull as he was at all others, he was not without the instinctive penetration with which all human bipeds watch over their individual goods and chattels. He sprang aside from the endearments of the siren, grasped her arm, and in a voice of querulous indignation, accused her of the theft.

> "Then rose the cry of women — shrill
> As shriek of goshawk on the hill."

Never were my ears so stunned. The angry authors in the adventures of Gil Blas were nothing to the disputants in the kennel at Charing Cross; we rowed, swore, slanged, with a Christian meekness and forbearance which would have re-

joiced Mr. Wilberforce to the heart, and we were already preparing ourselves for a more striking engagement, when we were most unwelcomely interrupted by the presence of three watchmen.

"Take away this — this — d—d woman," hiccoughed out Staunton; "she has sto — len — (hiccough) — my watch" — (hiccough).

"No such thing, watchman," hallooed out the accused, "the b—— counter-skipper never *had* any watch! he only filched a twopenny-halfpenny gilt chain out of his master, Levy, the pawnbroker's window, and stuck it in his *eel-skin* to make a show; ye did, ye pitiful, lanky-chopped son of a dog-fish, ye did."

"Come, come," said the watchman, "move on, move on."

"You be d—d for a Charley!" said one of our gang.

"Ho! ho! master jackanapes, I shall give you a cooling in the watch-house if you tips us any of your jaw. I dare say the young *'oman* here is quite right about ye, and ye never had any watch at all, at all."

"You are a liar!" cried Staunton: "and you are all in with each other, like a pack of rogues as you are."

"I 'll tell you what, young gemman," said another watchman,[1] who was a more potent, grave, and reverend signor than his comrades, "if you do not move on instantly, and let these decent young *'omen* alone, I 'll take you all up before Sir Richard."

"Charley, my boy," said Dartmore, "did you ever get thrashed for impertinence?"

The last-mentioned watchman took upon himself the reply to this interrogatory by a very summary proceeding: he collared Dartmore, and his companions did the same kind office to us. This action was not committed with impunity: in an instant two of the moon's minions — staffs, lanterns, and all — were measuring their length at the foot of their namesake of royal memory; the remaining Dogberry was, however, a tougher assailant; he held Staunton so firmly in his gripe

[1] The reader will remember that this work was written before the institution of the New Police.

that the poor youth could scarcely breathe out a faint and feeble d— ye of defiance, and with his disengaged hand he made such an admirable use of his rattle that we were surrounded in a trice.

As when an ant-hill is invaded, from every quarter and crevice of the mound arise and pour out an angry host, of whose grievous existence the unwary assailant had not dreamt; so from every lane and alley and street and crossing came fast and far the champions of the night.

"Gentlemen," said Dartmore, "we must fly; *sauve qui peut.*" We wanted no stronger admonition; and accordingly all of us who were able set off with the utmost velocity with which God had gifted us. I have some faint recollection that I myself headed the flight. I remember well that I dashed *up* the Strand, and dashed *down* a singular little shed, from which emanated the steam of tea, and a sharp querulous scream of "All hot—all hot; a penny a pint." I see, now, by the dim light of retrospection, a vision of an old woman in the kennel, and a pewter pot of mysterious ingredients precipitated into a greengrocer's shop, "te *virides inter lauros,*" as Vincent would have said. On we went, faster and faster as the rattle rang in our ears, and the tramp of the enemy echoed after us in hot pursuit.

"The *devil* take the hindmost," said Dartmore, breathlessly, as he kept up with me.

"The watchman has saved his majesty the trouble," answered I, looking back and seeing one of our friends in the clutch of the pursuers.

"On, on!" was Dartmore's only reply.

At last, after innumerable perils and various immersements into back passages and courts and alleys, which, like the chicaneries of law, preserved and befriended us,—in spite of all the efforts of justice, we fairly found ourselves in safety in the midst of a great square.

Here we paused, and after ascertaining our individual safeties, we looked round to ascertain the sum total of the general loss. Alas! we were wofully shorn of our beams,—we were

reduced one-half; only three out of the six survived the conflict and the flight.

"Half," (said the companion of Dartmore and myself, whose name was Tringle, and who was a dabbler in science, of which he was not a little vain), "half is less worthy than the whole; but the half is more worthy than nonentity."

"An axiom," said I, "not to be disputed; but, now that we are safe and have time to think about it, are you not slightly of opinion that we behaved somewhat scurvily to our better half, in leaving it so quietly in the hands of the Philistines?"

"By no means," answered Dartmore. "In a party whose members make no pretensions to sobriety, it would be too hard to expect that persons who are scarcely capable of taking care of themselves should take care of other people. No; we have, in all these exploits, only the one maxim of self-preservation."

"Allow me," said Tringle, seizing me by the coat, "to explain it to you on scientific principles. You will find in hydrostatics that the attraction of cohesion is far less powerful in fluids than in solids; namely, that persons who have been converting their 'solid flesh' into wine-skins, cannot stick so close to one another as when they are sober."

"Bravo, Tringle!" cried Dartmore; "and now, Pelham, I hope your delicate scruples are, after so luminous an *éclaircissement*, set at rest forever."

"You have convinced me," said I: "let us leave the unfortunates to their fate and Sir Richard. What is now to be done?"

"Why, in the first place," answered Dartmore, "let us reconnoitre. Does any one know this spot?"

"Not I," said both of us. We inquired of an old fellow, who was tottering home under the same Bacchanalian auspices as ourselves, and found we were in Lincoln's Inn Fields.

"Which shall we do?" asked I, "stroll home; or parade the streets, visit the Cider Cellar and the Finish, and kiss the first lass we meet in the morning bringing her charms and carrots to Covent Garden Market?"

"The latter," cried Dartmore and Tringle, "without doubt."

"Come, then," said I, "let us investigate Holborn and dip into St. Giles, and then find our way into some more known corner of the globe."

"Amen!" said Dartmore, and accordingly we renewed our march. We wound along a narrow lane, tolerably well known, I imagine, to the gentlemen of the quill, and entered Holborn. There was a beautiful still moon above us, which cast its light over a drowsy stand of hackney coaches, and shed a 'silver sadness' over the thin visages and sombre vestments of two guardians of the night, who regarded us, we thought, with a very ominous aspect of suspicion.

We strolled along, leisurely enough, till we were interrupted by a miserable-looking crowd, assembled round a dull, dingy, melancholy shop, from which gleamed a solitary candle, whose long, spinster-like wick was flirting away with an east wind, at a most unconscionable rate. Upon the haggard and worn countenances of the bystanders was depicted one general and sympathizing expression of eager, envious, wistful anxiety, which predominated so far over the various characters of each as to communicate something of a likeness to all. It was an impress of such a seal as you might imagine, not the arch-fiend, but one of his subordinate shepherds, would have set upon each of his flock.

Amid this crowd, I recognized more than one face which I had often seen in my equestrian lounges through town peering from the shoulders of some intrusive, ragamuffin wageless lackey, and squealing out of its wretched, unpampered mouth, the everlasting query of "*Want your 'oss held, sir?*" The rest were made up of unfortunate women of the vilest and most ragged description, aged itinerants, with features seared with famine, bleared eyes, dropping jaws, shivering limbs, and all the mortal signs of hopeless and aidless, and, worst of all, breadless infirmity. Here and there an Irish accent broke out in the oaths of national impatience, and was answered by the shrill, broken voice of some decrepit but indefatigable votaries of pleasure — (*Pleasure!*): but the chief character of the meeting was *silence,* — silence, eager, heavy, engrossing; and, above them all, shone out the quiet moon,

so calm, so holy, so breathing of still happiness and unpolluted glory, as if it never looked upon the traces of human passion and misery and sin. We stood for some moments contemplating the group before us, and then, following the steps of an old, withered crone, who, with a cracked cup in her hand, was pushing her way through the throng, we found ourselves in that dreary pandemonium, at once the origin and the refuge of humble vices,—*a gin-shop.*

"Poor devils," said Dartmore, to two or three of the nearest and eagerest among the crowd, "come in, and I will treat you."

The invitation was received with a promptness which must have been the most gratifying compliment to the inviter; and thus Want, which is the mother of Invention, does not object, now and then, to a bantling by Politeness.

We stood by the counter while our *protégés* were served, in silent observation. In low vice, to me, there is also something too gloomy, almost too *fearful* for light mirth: the contortions of the madman are stronger than those of the fool; but one does not laugh at them; the sympathy is for the cause —not the effect.

Leaning against the counter at one corner, and fixing his eyes deliberately and unmovingly upon us, was a man about the age of fifty, dressed in a costume of singular fashion, apparently pretending to an antiquity of taste correspondent with that of the material. This person wore a large cocked-hat, set rather jauntily on one side, and a black coat, which seemed an *omnium gatherum* of all abominations that had come in its way for the last ten years, and which appeared to advance equal claims (from the manner it was made and worn) to the several dignities of the art military and civil, the *arma* and the *toga;* from the neck of the wearer hung a blue ribbon of amazing breadth, and of a very surprising assumption of newness and splendour, by no means in harmony with the other parts of the *tout ensemble;* this was the guardian of an eye-glass of block tin, and of dimensions correspondent with the size of the ribbon. Stuck under the right arm, and shaped fearfully like a sword, peeped out the hilt of a very large

and sturdy-looking stick, "in war a weapon, in peace a support."

The features of the man were in keeping with his garb; they betokened an equal mixture of the traces of poverty, and the assumption of the dignities reminiscent of a better day. Two small light-blue eyes were shaded by bushy and rather imperious brows, which lowered from under the hat, like Cerberus out of his den. These, at present, wore the dull fixed stare of habitual intoxication, though we were not long in discovering that they had not yet forgotten to sparkle with all the quickness and more than the roguery of youth. His nose was large, prominent, and aristocratic; nor would it have been ill-formed, had not some unknown cause pushed it a little nearer towards the left ear than would have been thought, by an equitable judge of beauty, fair to the pretensions of the right. The lines in the countenance were marked as if in iron, and, had the face been perfectly composed, must have given to it a remarkably stern and sinister appearance; but at that moment there was an arch leer about the mouth, which softened, or at least altered, the expression the features habitually wore.

"Sir," said he (after a few minutes of silence), "sir," said he, approaching me, "will you do me the honour to take a pinch of snuff?" and so saying, he tapped a curious copper box, with a picture of his late Majesty upon it.

"With great pleasure," answered I, bowing low, "since the act is a prelude to the pleasure of your acquaintance."

My gentleman of the gin-shop opened his box with an air, as he replied,—"It is but seldom that I meet, in places of this description, gentlemen of the exterior of yourself and your friends. I am not a person very easily deceived by the outward man. Horace, sir, could not have included *me*, when he said *specie decipimur*. I perceive that you are surprised at hearing me quote Latin. Alas! sir, in my wandering and various manner of life I may say, with Cicero and Pliny, that the study of letters has proved my greatest consolation. 'Gaudium mihi,' says the latter author, 'et solatium in literis: nihil tam lætum quod his non lætius, nihil tam triste quod

non per has sit minus triste.' G—d d—n ye, you scoundrel, give me my gin! ar'n't you ashamed of keeping a gentleman of my fashion so long waiting?"

This was said to the sleepy dispenser of the spirituous potations, who looked up for a moment, with a dull stare, and then replied, "Your money first, Mr. Gordon—you owe us sevenpence halfpenny already."

"Blood and confusion! speakest thou to me of halfpence! Know that thou art a mercenary varlet; yes, knave, mark that, a mercenary varlet." The sleepy Ganymede replied not, and the wrath of Mr. Gordon subsided into a low, interrupted, internal muttering of strange oaths, which rolled and grumbled, and rattled in his throat, like distant thunder.

At length he cheered up a little. "Sir," said he, addressing Dartmore, "it is a sad thing to be dependent on these low persons: the wise among the ancients were never so wrong as when they panegyrized poverty; it is the wicked man's tempter, the good man's perdition, the proud man's curse, the melancholy man's *halter*."

"You are a strange old cock," said the unsophisticated Dartmore, eying him from head to foot; "there 's half a sovereign for you."

The blunt blue eyes of Mr. Gordon sharpened up in an instant; he seized the treasure with an avidity of which the minute after he seemed somewhat ashamed; for he said, playing with the coin in an idle, indifferent manner,—"Sir, you show a consideration, and, let me add, sir, a delicacy of feeling, unusual at your years. Sir, I shall repay you at my earliest leisure, and in the meanwhile allow me to say, that I shall be proud of the honour of your acquaintance."

"Thank ye, old boy," said Dartmore, putting on his glove before he accepted the offered hand of his new friend, which though it was tendered with great grace and dignity, was of a marvellously dingy and soapless aspect.

"Hark ye, you d—d son of a gun!" cried Mr. Gordon,—abruptly turning from Dartmore, after a hearty shake of the hand, to the man at the counter,—'hark ye! give me change for this half-sovereign, and be d—d to you; and then tip us

a double gill of your best; you whey-faced, liver-drenched, pence-griping, belly-griping, pauper-cheating, sleepy-souled Arismanes of bad spirits. Come, gentlemen, if you have nothing better to do, I 'll take you to my club; we are a rare knot of us, there,—all choice spirits; some of them are a little uncouth, it is true, but we are not all born Chesterfields. Sir, allow me to ask the favour of your name?"

"Dartmore."

"Mr. Dartmore, you are a gentleman. Hallo! you *Liquor-pond-street of a scoundrel,*—having nothing of liquor but the name; you narrow, nasty, pitiful alley of a fellow, with a kennel for a body and a sink for a soul,—give me my change and my gin, you scoundrel! Humph, is that all right, you Procrustes of the counter, chopping our lawful appetites down to your rascally standard of sevenpence halfpenny? Why don't you take a motto, you Paynim dog? Here's one for you,—'Measure for measure, and the devil to pay!' Humph, you pitiful toadstool of a trader, you have no more spirit than an empty water-bottle; and when you go to h—ll, they 'll use you to cool the bellows. I say, you rascal, why are you worse off than the devil in a hipbath of brimstone?—because, you knave, the devil then would only be half d—d, and you're d—d all over! Come, gentlemen, I am at your service."

CHAPTER L.

The history of a philosophical vagabond, pursuing novelty, and losing content.—*Vicar of Wakefield.*

We followed our strange friend through the crowd at the door, which he elbowed on either side with the most aristocratic disdain, perfectly regardless of their jokes at his dress and manner; he no sooner got through the throng than he stopped short (though in the midst of the kennel) and offered

us his arm. This was an honour of which we were by no means desirous; for, to say nothing of the shabbiness of Mr. Gordon's exterior, there was a certain odour in his garments which was possibly less displeasing to the wearer than to his acquaintance. Accordingly, we pretended not to notice this invitation, and merely said we would follow his guidance.

He turned up a narrow street, and after passing some of the most ill-favoured alleys I ever had the happiness of beholding, he stopped at a low door; here he knocked twice, and was at last admitted by a slip-shod, yawning wench, with red arms, and a profusion of sandy hair. This Hebe Mr. Gordon greeted with a loving kiss, which the kissee resented in a very unequivocal strain of disgustful reproach.

"Hush! my Queen of Clubs; my Sultana Sootina!" said Mr. Gordon; "hush! or these gentlemen will think you in earnest. I have brought three new customers to the club."

This speech somewhat softened the incensed Houri of Mr. Gordon's Paradise, and she very civilly asked us to enter.

"Stop!" said Mr. Gordon with an air of importance, "I must just step in and ask the gentlemen to admit you,—merely a form; for a word from me will be quite sufficient." And so saying, he vanished for about five minutes.

On his return, he said, with a cheerful countenance, that we were free of the house, but that we must pay a shilling each as the customary fee. This sum was soon collected, and quietly inserted in the waistcoat pocket of our chaperon, who then conducted us up the passage into a small back room, where were sitting about seven or eight men, enveloped in smoke and moistening the fever of the Virginian plant with various preparations of malt. On entering, I observed Mr. Gordon deposit, at a sort of bar, the sum of threepence, by which I shrewdly surmised he had gained the sum of two and ninepence by our admission. With a very arrogant air, he proceeded to the head of the table, sat himself down with a swagger, and called out, like a lusty roisterer of the true kidney, for a pint of purl and a pipe. Not to be out of fashion, we ordered the same articles of luxury.

After we had all commenced a couple of puffs at our pipes,

I looked round at our fellow guests: they seemed in a very poor state of body, as might naturally be supposed; and, in order to ascertain how far the condition of the mind was suited to that of the frame, I turned round to Mr. Gordon, and asked him in a whisper to give us a few hints as to the genius and characteristics of the individual components of his club. Mr. Gordon declared himself delighted with the proposal, and we all adjourned to a separate table at the corner of the room, where Mr. Gordon, after a deep draught at the purl, thus began: —

"You observe yon thin, meagre, cadaverous animal, with rather an intelligent and melancholy expression of countenance,— his name is Chitterling Crabtree; his father was an eminent coal-merchant, and left him £10,000. Crabtree turned politician. When fate wishes to ruin a man of moderate abilities and moderate fortune, she makes him an orator. Mr. Chitterling Crabtree attended all the meetings at the Crown and Anchor; subscribed to the aid of the suffering friends of freedom; harangued, argued, sweated, wrote; was fined and imprisoned; regained his liberty and married. His wife loved a community of goods no less than her spouse, and ran *off* with one citizen, while he was running on to the others. Chitterling dried his tears; and contented himself with the reflection, that 'in a proper state of things' such an event could not have occurred.

"Mr. Crabtree's money and life were now half gone. One does not subscribe to the friends of freedom and spout at their dinners for nothing. But the worst drop was yet in the cup. An undertaking of the most spirited and promising nature was conceived by the chief of the friends and the dearest familiar of Mr. Chitterling Crabtree. Our worthy embarked his fortune in a speculation so certain of success: crash went the speculation, and off went the friend; Mr. Crabtree was ruined. He was not, however, a man to despair at trifles. What were bread, meat, and beer to the champion of equality! He went to the meeting that very night: he said he gloried in his losses; they were for the cause; the whole conclave rang with shouts of applause, and Mr. Chitterling

Crabtree went to bed happier than ever. I need not pursue his history further; *you see him here,*—verbum sat. He spouts at the 'Ciceronian,' for half a crown a night, and to this day subscribes sixpence a week to the cause of 'liberty and enlightenment all over the world.'"

"By Heaven," cried Dartmore, "he is a fine fellow, and my father shall do something for him."

Gordon pricked up his ears, and continued,—"Now, for the second person, gentlemen, whom I am about to describe to you. You see that middle-sized stout man, with a slight squint, and a restless, lowering, cunning expression?"

"What! him in the kerseymere breeches and green jacket?" said I.

"The same," answered Gordon. "His real name, when he does not travel with an *alias*, is Job Jonson. He is one of the most remarkable rogues in Christendom; he is so noted a cheat that there is not a pickpocket in England who would keep company with him if he had anything to lose. He was the favourite of his father, who intended to leave him all his fortune, which was tolerably large. He robbed him one day on the high road; his father discovered it and disinherited him. He was placed at a merchant's office, and rose, step by step, to be head clerk and intended son-in-law. Three nights before his marriage he broke open the till, and was turned out of doors the next morning. If you were going to do him the greatest favour in the world, he could not keep his hands out of your pocket till you had done it. In short, he has rogued himself out of a dozen fortunes and a hundred friends, and managed, with incredible dexterity and success, to cheat himself into beggary and a pot of beer."

"I beg your pardon," said I, "but I think a sketch of your own life must be more amusing than that of any one else: am I impertinent in asking for it?"

"Not at all," replied Mr. Gordon; "you shall have it in as few words as possible.

"I was born a gentleman, and educated with some pains; they told me I was a genius, and it was not very hard to persuade me of the truth of the assertion. I wrote verses to a wonder; robbed orchards according to military tactics;

never played at marbles without explaining to my competitors the theory of attraction; and was the best informed, most mischievous little rascal in the whole school. My family were in great doubt what to do with so prodigious a wonder: one said the law, another the church, a third talked of diplomacy, and a fourth assured my mother, that if I could but be introduced at court, I should be lord chamberlain in a twelvemonth. While my friends were deliberating I took the liberty of deciding: I enlisted, in a fit of loyal valour, in a marching regiment; my friends made the best of a bad job, and bought me an ensigncy.

"I recollect I read Plato the night before I went to battle; the next morning they told me I ran away. I am sure it was a malicious invention; for, if I had, I should have recollected it; whereas, I was in such a confusion that I cannot remember a single thing that happened in the whole course of that day. About six months afterwards I found myself out of the army and in jail; and no sooner had my relations released me from the latter predicament than I set off on my travels. At Dublin, I lost my heart to a rich widow (as I thought); I married her, and found her as poor as myself. Heaven knows what would have become of me, if I had not taken to drinking; my wife scorned to be outdone by me in anything; she followed my example, and at the end of a year I followed her to the grave. Since then I have taken warning, and been scrupulously sober.— Betty, my love, another pint of purl.

"I was now once more a free man in the prime of my life; handsome, as you see, gentlemen, and with the strength and spirit of a young Hercules. Accordingly I dried my tears, turned marker by night at a gambling-house, and buck by day in Bond Street (for I returned to London). I remember well one morning that his present Majesty was pleased, *en passant*, to admire my buckskins: *tempora mutantur*. Well, gentlemen, one night at a brawl in our *salon* my nose met with a rude hint to move to the right. I went in a great panic to the surgeon, who mended the matter by moving it to the left. There, thank God! it has rested in quiet ever since. It is needless to tell you the nature of the quarrel in which this accident occurred; however, my friends thought it necessary

to remove me from the situation I then held. I went once more to Ireland, and was introduced to 'a friend of freedom.' I was poor; that circumstance is quite enough to make a patriot. They sent me to Paris on a secret mission, and when I returned my friends were in prison. Being always of a free disposition I did not envy them their situation; accordingly I returned to England. Halting at Liverpool, with a most debilitated purse, I went into a silversmith's shop to brace it, and, about six months afterwards, I found myself on a marine excursion to Botany Bay. On my return from that country, I resolved to turn my literary talents to account. I went to Cambridge, wrote declamations, and translated Virgil at so much a sheet. My relations (thanks to my letters, neither few nor far between) soon found me out; they allowed me (they do still) half a guinea a week; and upon this and my declamations I manage to exist. Ever since, my chief residence has been at Cambridge. I am a universal favourite with both graduates and undergraduates. I have reformed my life and my manners, and have become the quiet, orderly person you behold me. Age tames the fiercest of us,—

"'Non sum qualis eram.'

"Betty, bring me my purl, and be d—d to you.

"It is now vacation time, and I have come to town with the idea of holding lectures on the state of education. Mr. Dartmore, your health. Gentlemen, yours. My story is done,—and I hope you will pay for the purl."[1]

[1] Poor Jemmy Gordon, thou art no more! The stones of Cambridge no longer prate of thy whereabout! Death hath removed thee; may it *not* be to that bourne where alone thy oaths can be outdone! He was indeed a singular character, that Jemmy Gordon, as many a generation of Cantabs can attest. His long stick and his cocked hat, and his tattered Lucretius, and his mighty eye-glass, how familiarly do they intermingle with our recollections of Trinity and of Trumpington Streets! If I have rightly heard, his death was the consequence of a fractured limb. Laid by the leg in a lofty attic, his spirit was not tamed; the noises he made were astounding to the last. The grim foe carried him off in a whirlwind of slang! I do not say, "*Peace* to his manes," for quiet would be the worst hell that could await him; and heaven itself would be torture to Jemmy Gordon, if he were not allowed to swear in it! Noisiest of reprobates, fare thee well!—H. P.

CHAPTER LI.

I HATE a drunken rogue. — *Twelfth Night.*

WE took an affectionate leave of Mr. Gordon, and found ourselves once more in the open air; the smoke and the purl had contributed greatly to the continuance of our inebriety and we were as much averse to bed as ever. We conveyed ourselves, laughing and rioting all the way, to a stand of hackney-coaches. We entered the head of the flock, and drove to Piccadilly. It set us down at the corner of the Haymarket.

"Past two!" cried the watchman, as we sauntered by him.

"You lie, you rascal," said I, "you have passed *three* now."

We were all merry enough to laugh at this sally; and seeing a light gleam from the entrance of the Royal Saloon, we knocked at the door, and it was opened unto us. We sat down at the only spare table in the place, and looked round at the smug and *varmint* citizens with whom the room was filled.

"Hallo, waiter!" cried Tringle, "some red-wine negus; I know not why it is, but the devil himself could never cure me of thirst. Wine and I have a most chemical attraction for each other. You know that we always estimate the force of attraction between bodies by the force required to separate them!"

While we were all three as noisy and nonsensical as our best friends could have wished us, a new stranger entered, approached, looked round the room for a seat, and seeing none, walked leisurely up to our table, and accosted me with a — "Ha! Mr. Pelham, how d'ye do? Well met; by your leave I will sip my grog at your table. No offence I hope, — more the merrier, eh? Waiter, a glass of hot brandy-and-water, — not too weak. D'ye hear?"

Need I say that this pithy and pretty address proceeded from the mouth of Mr. Tom Thornton? He was somewhat more than half drunk, and his light prying eyes twinkled dizzily in his head. Dartmore, who was, and is, the best-natured fellow alive, hailed the signs of his intoxication as a sort of freemasonry, and made way for him beside himself. I could not help remarking that Thornton seemed singularly less sleek than heretofore: his coat was out at the elbows; his linen was torn and soiled; there was not a vestige of the vulgar spruceness about him which was formerly one of his most prominent characteristics. He had also lost a great deal of the florid health formerly visible in his face; his cheeks seemed sunk and haggard, his eyes hollow, and his complexion sallow and squalid, in spite of the flush which intemperance spread over it at the moment. However, he was in high spirits, and soon made himself so entertaining that Dartmore and Tringle grew charmed with him.

As for me, the antipathy I had to the man sobered and silenced me for the rest of the night; and finding that Dartmore and his friend were eager for an introduction to some female friends of Thornton, whom he mentioned in terms of high praise, I tore myself from them, and made the best of my way home.

CHAPTER LII.

Illi mors gravis incubat,
Qui, notus nimis omnibus,
Ignotus moritur sibi. — Seneca.

Nous serons par nos lois les juges des ouvrages. — *Les Femmes Savantes*

Whilst we do speak, our fire
Doth into ice expire;
Flames turn to frost,
And, ere we can
Know how our crow turns swan,
Or how a silver snow
Springs there, where jet did grow,
Our fading spring is in dull winter lost. — Jasper Mayne.

Vincent called on me the next day. "I have news for you," said he, "though somewhat of a lugubrious nature. *Lugete Veneres Cupidinesque!* You remember the Duchesse de Perpignan?"

"I should think so," was my answer.

"Well, then," pursued Vincent, "she is no more. Her death was worthy of her life. She was to give a brilliant entertainment to all the foreigners at Paris; the day before it took place a dreadful eruption broke out on her complexion. She sent for the doctors in despair. 'Cure me against to-morrow,' she said, 'and name your own reward.' 'Madame, it is impossible to do so with safety to your health.' '*Au diable* with your health!' said the duchesse, 'what is health to an eruption?' The doctors took the hint; an external application was used: the duchesse woke in the morning as beautiful as ever; the entertainment took place; she was the Armida of the scene. Supper was announced. She took the arm of the —— ambassador, and moved through the crowd amidst the audible admiration of all. She stopped for a moment at the door; all eyes were upon her. A fearful and ghastly convulsion

passed over her countenance, her lips trembled, she fell on the ground with the most terrible contortions of face and frame. They carried her to bed. She remained for some days insensible; when she recovered, she asked for a looking-glass. Her whole face was drawn on one side, not a wreck of beauty was left; that night she poisoned herself!"

I cannot express how shocked I was at this information. Much as I had cause to be disgusted with the conduct of that unhappy woman, I could find in my mind no feeling but commiseration and horror at her death; and it was with great difficulty that Vincent persuaded me to accept an invitation to Lady Roseville's for the evening, to meet Glanville and himself.

However, I cheered up as the night came on; and though my mind was still haunted with the tale of the morning, it was neither in a musing nor a melancholy mood that I entered the drawing-room at Lady Roseville's. "So runs the world away!"

Glanville was there in his customary mourning.

"Pelham," he said, when he joined me, "do you remember at Lady ——'s, one night, I said I would introduce you to my sister? I had no opportunity then, for we left the house before she returned from the refreshment-room. May I do so now?"

I need not say what was my answer. I followed Glanville into the next room; and, to my inexpressible astonishment and delight, discovered in his sister the beautiful and never-forgotten stranger I had seen at Cheltenham.

For once in my life I was embarrassed: my bow would have shamed a major in the line, and my stuttered and irrelevant address an alderman in the presence of his Majesty. However, a few moments sufficed to recover me, and I strained every nerve to be as agreeable as possible.

After I had conversed with Miss Glanville for some time, Lady Roseville joined us. Stately and Juno-like as was that charming personage in general, she relaxed into a softness of manner to Miss Glanville that quite won my heart. She drew her to a part of the room where a very animated and

chiefly literary conversation was going on; and I, resolving to make the best of my time, followed them, and once more found myself seated beside Miss Glanville. Lady Roseville was on the other side of my beautiful companion; and I observed that, whenever she took her eyes from Miss Glanville, they always rested upon her brother, who, in the midst of the disputation and the disputants, sat silent, gloomy, and absorbed.

The conversation turned upon Scott's novels; thence on novels in general; and finally on the particular one of "Anastasius."

"It is a thousand pities," said Vincent, "that the scene of that novel is so far removed from us. But it is a great misfortune for Hope that —

> " 'To *learning* he narrowed his mind,
> And gave up to the *East* what was meant for mankind.'

One often loses, in admiration at the knowledge of peculiar costume, the deference one would have paid to the masterly grasp of universal character."

"It must require," said Lady Roseville, "an extraordinary combination of mental powers to produce a perfect novel."

"One so extraordinary," answered Vincent, "that, though we have one perfect epic poem, and several which pretend to perfection, we have not one perfect novel in the world.[1] Gil Blas approaches more to perfection than any other; but it must be confessed that there is a want of dignity, of moral rectitude, and of what I may term moral beauty, throughout the whole book. If an author could combine the various excellences of Scott and Le Sage, with a greater and more metaphysical knowledge of morals than either, we might expect from him the perfection we have not yet discovered since the days of Apuleius."

"Speaking of morals," said Lady Roseville, "do you not think every novel should have its distinct object, and incul-

[1] For "Don Quixote" is not what Lord Vincent terms a *novel;* namely, the actual representation of real life.

cate, throughout, some one peculiar moral, such as many of Marmontel's and Miss Edgeworth's?"

"No!" answered Vincent, "every good novel has one great end,—the same in all; namely, the increasing our knowledge of the heart. It is thus that a novel-writer must be a philosopher. Whoever succeeds in showing us more accurately the nature of ourselves and species has done science, and consequently virtue, the most important benefit; *for every truth is a moral. This* great and universal end, I am led to imagine, is rather crippled than extended by the rigorous attention to the *one* isolated moral you mention.

"Thus Dryden, in his 'Essay on the Progress of Satire,' very rightly prefers Horace to Juvenal, so far as *instruction* is concerned: because the miscellaneous satires of the former are directed against every vice; the more confined ones of the latter (for the most part) only against *one*. All mankind is the field the novelist should cultivate; all truth the moral he should strive to bring home. It is in occasional dialogue, in desultory maxims, in deductions from events, in analysis of character, that he should benefit and instruct. It is not enough,—and I wish a certain novelist who has lately arisen would remember this,—it is not enough for a writer to have a good heart, amiable sympathies, and what are termed high feelings, in order to shape out a moral, either true in itself or beneficial in its inculcation. Before he touches his tale, he should be thoroughly acquainted with the intricate science of morals, and the metaphysical, as well as the more open, operations of the mind. If his knowledge is not deep and clear, his love of the good may only lead him into error; and he may pass off the prejudices of a susceptible heart for the precepts of virtue. Would to Heaven that people would think it necessary to be instructed before they attempt to instruct! 'Dire simplement que la vertu est vertu parce qu'elle est bonne en son fond, et le vice tout au contraire, ce n'est pas les faire connaître.' For me, if I were to write a novel, I would first make myself an acute, active, and vigilant observer of men and manners. Secondly, I would, after having thus noted effects by action in the world, trace the causes by

books, and meditation in my closet. It is then, and not till then, that I would study the lighter graces of style and decoration; nor would I give the rein to invention till I was convinced that it would create neither monsters of men, nor falsities of truth. For my vehicles of instruction or amusement, I would have people as they are,—neither worse nor better,—and the moral they should convey should be rather through jest or irony, than gravity and seriousness. There never was an imperfection corrected by portraying perfection; and if levity and ridicule be said so easily to allure to sin, I do not see why they should not be used in defence of virtue. Of this we may be sure, that as laughter is a distinct indication of the human race, so there never was a brute mind or a savage heart that loved to indulge in it."[1]

Vincent ceased.

"Thank you, my lord," said Lady Roseville, as she took Miss Glanville's arm and moved from the table. "For once you have condescended to give us your own sense, and not other people's; you have scarce made a single quotation."

"Accept," answered Vincent, rising,—

"'Accept a miracle instead of wit.'"

[1] The Sage of Malmesbury expresses a very different opinion of the philosophy of laughter; and, for my part, I think his doctrine, in great measure, though not altogether, true. See Hobbes on "Human Nature," and the answer to him in Campbell's "Rhetoric."—AUTHOR.

CHAPTER LIII.

Oh! I love! — Methinks
This world of love is fit for all the world,
And that, for gentle hearts, another name
Should speak of gentler thoughts than the world owns.
P. B. Shelley.

For me, I ask no more than honour gives,
To think me yours, and rank me with your friends.
Shakspeare.

Callous and worldly as I may seem, from the tone of these memoirs, I can say, safely, that one of the most delicious evenings I ever spent was the first of my introduction to Miss Glanville. I went home intoxicated with a subtle spirit of enjoyment that gave a new zest and freshness to life. Two little hours seemed to have changed the whole course of my thoughts and feelings.

There was nothing about Miss Glanville like a heroine; I hate your heroines. She had none of that "modest ease," and "quiet dignity," of which certain writers speak with such applause. Thank Heaven, *she was alive!* She had great sense, but the playfulness of a child; extreme rectitude of mind, but with the tenderness of a gazelle: if she laughed, all her countenance, lips, eyes, forehead, cheeks, laughed too; "Paradise seemed opened in her face:" if she looked grave, it was such a lofty and *upward*, yet sweet and gentle gravity, that you might (had you been gifted with the least imagination) have supposed, from the model of her countenance, a new order of angels between the cherubim and seraphim, the angels of Love and Wisdom. She was not, perhaps, quite so silent in society as my individual taste would desire; but when she spoke, it was with a propriety of thought and diction which made me lament when her voice had ceased.

It was as if something beautiful in creation had stopped suddenly.

Enough of this now. I was lazily turning (the morning after Lady Roseville's) over some old books, when Vincent entered. I observed that his face was flushed, and his eyes sparkled with more than their usual brilliancy. He looked carefully round the room, and then, approaching his chair towards mine, said, in a low tone,—

"Pelham, I have something of importance on my mind which I wish to discuss with you: but let me entreat you to lay aside your usual levity, and pardon me if I say affectation; meet me with the candour and plainness which are the real distinctions of your character."

"My Lord Vincent," I replied, "there are, in your words, a depth and solemnity which pierce me, through one of N——'s best stuffed coats, even to the very heart. I will hear you as you desire, from the alpha to the omega of your discourse."

"My dear friend," said Vincent, "I have often seen that, in spite of all your love of pleasure, you have your mind continually turned towards higher and graver objects; and I have thought the better of your talents, and of your future success, for the little parade you make of the one, and the little care you appear to pay to the other; for

"'T is a common proof,
That lowliness is young ambition's ladder.'

I have also observed that you have, of late, been much to Lord Dawton's; I have even heard that you have been twice closeted with him. It is well known that that person entertains hopes of leading the Opposition to the *grata arva* of the Treasury benches; and that, notwithstanding the years in which the Whigs have been out of office, there are some persons who pretend to foresee the chance of a coalition between them and Mr. Gaskell, to whose principles it is also added that they have been gradually assimilating."

Here Vincent paused a moment, and looked full at me. I met his eye with a glance as searching as his own. His look changed, and he continued,—

"Now listen to me, Pelham; such a coalition never can take place. You smile; I repeat it. It is my object to form a third party; perhaps, while the two great sects 'anticipate the cabinet designs of fate,' there may suddenly come by a third, 'to whom the whole shall be referred.' Say that you think it not impossible that you may join us, and I will tell you more."

I paused for three minutes before I answered Vincent. I then said,—"I thank you very sincerely for your proposal; tell me the names of two of your designed party, and I will answer you."

"Lord Lincoln and Lord Lesborough."

"What!" said I—"the Whig who says in the Upper House that, whatever may be the distresses of the people, they shall not be gratified at the cost of one of the despotic privileges of the aristocracy. Go to!—I will have none of him. As to Lesborough, he is a fool and a boaster, who is always puffing his own vanity with the windiest pair of oratorical bellows that ever were made by air and brass, for the purpose of sound and smoke, 'signifying nothing.' Go to!—I will have nothing of him either."

"You are right in your judgment of my *confrères*," answered Vincent; "but we must make use of bad tools for good purposes."

"No—no!" said I; "the commonest carpenter will tell you the reverse."

Vincent eyed me suspiciously. "Look you!" said he; "I know well that no man loves better than you place, power, and reputation. Do you grant this?"

"I do," was my reply.

"Join with us; I will place you in the House of Commons immediately; if we succeed, you shall have the first and the best post I can give you. Now—'under which king, Bezonian, speak or die!'"

"I answer you in the words of the same worthy you quote," said I — "'A foutra for thine office.' — Do you know, Vincent, that I have, strange as it may seem to you, such a thing as a conscience? It is true I forget it now and then; but in a public capacity, the recollection of others would put me very soon in mind of it. I know your party well. I cannot imagine — forgive me — one more injurious to the country, nor one more revolting to myself; and I do positively affirm that I would sooner feed my poodle on paunch and liver, instead of cream and fricassee, than be an instrument in the hands of men like Lincoln and Lesborough; who talk much, who perform nothing — who join ignorance of every principle of legislation to indifference for every benefit to the people: — who are full of 'wise saws,' but empty of 'modern instances' — who level upwards, and trample downwards — and would only value the ability you are pleased to impute to me, in the exact proportion that a sportsman values the ferret that burrows for his pleasure and destroys for his interest. Your *party* can't stand."

Vincent turned pale. "And how long," said he, "have you learnt 'the principles of legislation,' and this mighty affection for the 'benefit of the people'?"

"Ever since," said I, coldly, "I learnt *any* thing! The first piece of *real* knowledge I ever gained was, that my interest was incorporated with that of the beings with whom I had the chance of being cast: if I injure them, I injure myself: if I can do them any good, I receive the benefit in common with the rest. Now, as I have a great love for that personage who has now the honour of addressing you, I resolved to be honest for his sake. So much for my affection for the benefit of the people. As to the little knowledge of the principles of legislation, on which you are kind enough to compliment me, look over the books on this table, or the writings in this desk, and know, that ever since I had the misfortune of parting from you at Cheltenham, there has not been a day in which I have spent less than six hours reading and writing on that sole subject. But enough of this — will you ride to-day?"

Vincent rose slowly.

> "Gli arditi [said he] tuoi voti
> Già noti mi sono,
> Ma invano a quel trono,
> Tu aspiri con me:
> Trema per te!"

"'Io trema' [I replied out of the same opera] — 'Io trema — di te!'"

"Well," answered Vincent, and his fine high nature overcame his momentary resentment and chagrin at my rejection of his offer — "well, I honour you for your sentiments, though they are opposed to my own. I may depend on your secrecy?"

"You may," said I.

"I forgive you, Pelham," rejoined Vincent: "we part friends."

"Wait one moment," said I, "and pardon me, if I venture to speak in the language of caution to one in every way so superior to myself. No one (I say this with a safe conscience, for I never flattered my friend in my life, though I have often adulated my enemy) — no one has a greater admiration for your talents than myself; I desire eagerly to see you in the station most fit for their display; pause one moment before you link yourself not only to a party, but to principles that cannot stand. You have only to exert yourself, and you may either lead the Opposition, or be among the foremost in the administration. Take something certain rather than what is doubtful; or at least stand alone; — such is my belief in your powers, if fairly tried, that if you were not united to those men, I would promise you faithfully to stand or fall by you alone, even if we had not through all England another soldier to our standard; but —"

"I thank you, Pelham," said Vincent, interrupting me: "till we meet in public as enemies, we are friends in private — I desire no more. Farewell."

CHAPTER LIV.

Il vaut mieux employer notre esprit à supporter les infortunes qui nous arrivent, qu' à prévoir celles qui nous peuvent arriver. — Rochefoucauld.

No sooner had Vincent departed than I buttoned my coat, and sallied out through a cold easterly wind to Lord Dawton's. It was truly said by the political quoter that I had been often to that nobleman's, although I have not thought it advisable to speak of my political adventures hitherto. I have before said that I was ambitious; and the sagacious have probably already discovered that I was somewhat less ignorant than it was my usual pride and pleasure to appear. I had established, among my uncle's friends, a reputation for talent; and no sooner had I been personally introduced to Lord Dawton than I found myself courted by that personage in a manner equally gratifying and uncommon. When I lost my seat in Parliament, Dawton assured me that, before the session was over, I should be returned for one of his boroughs; and though my mind revolted at the idea of *becoming dependent* on any party, I made little scruple of promising *conditionally* to *ally* myself to his. So far had affairs gone, when I was honoured with Vincent's proposal. I found Lord Dawton in his library, with the Marquis of Clandonald (Lord Dartmore's father, and from his rank and property, classed among the highest, as, from his vanity and restlessness, he was among the most active members of the Opposition). Clandonald left the room when I entered. Few men in office are wise enough to trust the young, as if the greater zeal and sincerity of youth did not more than compensate for its appetite for the gay or its thoughtlessness of the serious!

When we were alone, Dawton said to me, "We are in great despair at the motion upon the ——, to be made in the Lower House. We have not a single person whom we can depend

upon for the sweeping and convincing answer we ought to make; and though we should at least muster our full force in voting, our whipper-in, poor ——, is so ill, that I fear we shall make but a very pitiful figure."

"Give me," said I, "full permission to go forth into the highways and byways, and I will engage to bring a whole legion of dandies to the House door. I can go no farther; your other agents must do the rest."

"Thank you, my dear young friend," said Lord Dawton, eagerly; "thank you a thousand times: we must really get you into the House as soon as possible; you will serve us more than I can express."

I bowed with a sneer I could not repress. Dawton pretended not to observe it. "Come," said I, "my lord, we have no time to lose. I shall meet you, perhaps, at Brookes's, to-morrow evening, and report to you respecting my success."

Lord Dawton pressed my hand warmly, and followed me to the door.

"He is the best premier we could have," thought I; "but he deceives himself, if he thinks Henry Pelham will play the jackal to his lion. He will soon see that I shall keep for myself what he thinks I hunt for him." I passed through Pall Mall and thought of Glanville. I knocked at his door; he was at home. I found him leaning his cheek upon his hand, in a thoughtful position; an open letter was before him.

"Read that," he said, pointing to it.

I did so. It was from the agent to the Duke of ——, and contained his nomination to an opposition borough.

"A new toy, Pelham," said he, faintly smiling; "but a little longer, and they will all be broken; the *rattle* will be the last."

"My dear, dear Glanville," said I, much affected, "do not talk thus; you have everything before you."

"Yes," interrupted Glanville, "you are right, for everything left for me is in the grave. Do you imagine that I can taste one of the possessions which fortune has heaped upon me; that I have one healthful faculty, one sense of enjoy-

ment, among the hundred which other men are 'heirs to'! When did you ever see me for a moment happy? I live, as it were, on a rock, barren and herbless and sapless, and cut off from all human fellowship and intercourse. I had only a single object left to live for, when you saw me at Paris; I have gratified that, and the end and purpose of my existence is fulfilled. Heaven is merciful; but a little while, and this feverish and unquiet spirit shall be at rest."

I took his hand and pressed it.

"Feel," said he, "this dry, burning skin; count my pulse through the variations of a single minute, and you will cease either to pity me or to speak to me of life. For months I have had, night and day, a wasting — wasting fever, of brain and heart and frame; the fire works well, and the fuel is nearly consumed."

He paused, and we were both silent. In fact, I was shocked at the fever of his pulse, no less than affected at the despondency of his words. At last I spoke to him of medical advice.

"'Canst thou,'" he said, with a deep solemnity of voice and manner, "'administer to a mind diseased — pluck from the memory' — Ah! away with the quotation and the reflection." And he sprang from the sofa, and, going to the window, opened it and leaned out for a few moments in silence. When he turned again towards me, his manner had regained its usual quiet. He spoke about the important motion approaching on the ——, and promised to attend; and then, by degrees, I led him to talk of his sister.

He mentioned her with enthusiasm. "Beautiful as Helen is," he said, "her face is the very faintest reflection of her mind. Her habits of thought are so pure that every impulse is a virtue. Never was there a person to whom goodness was so easy. Vice seems something so opposite to her nature that I cannot imagine it possible for her to sin."

"Will you not call with me at your mother's?" said I. "I am going there to-day."

Glanville replied in the affirmative, and we went at once to Lady Glanville's in Berkeley Square. We were admitted

into his mother's *boudoir*. She was alone with Miss Glanville. Our conversation soon turned from commonplace topics to those of a graver nature; the deep melacholy of Glanville's mind imbued all his thoughts, when he once suffered himself to express them.

"Why," said Lady Glanville, who seemed painfully fond of her son, "why do you not go more into the world? You suffer your mind to prey upon itself till it destroys you. My dear, dear son, how very ill you seem!"

Ellen, whose eyes swam in tears, as they gazed upon her brother, laid her beautiful hand upon his, and said, "For my mother's sake, Reginald, do take more care of yourself: you want air and exercise and amusement."

"No," answered Glanville, "I want nothing but occupation, and, thanks to the Duke of ——, I have now got it. I am chosen member for ——."

"I am *too* happy," said the proud mother; "you will now be all I have ever predicted for you;" and, in her joy at the moment, she forgot the hectic of his cheek and the hollowness of his eye.

"Do you remember," said Reginald, turning to his sister, "those beautiful lines in my favorite, Ford,—

"'Glories
Of human greatness are but pleasing dreams,
And shadows soon decaying. On the stage
Of my mortality, my youth has acted
Some scenes of vanity, drawn out at length
By varied pleasures,—sweetened in the mixture
But tragical in issue. Beauty, pomp,
With every sensuality our giddiness
Doth frame an idol, are inconstant friends
When any troubled passion makes us halt
On the unguarded castle of the mind.'"

"Your verses," said I, "are beautiful, even to me, who have no soul for poetry, and never wrote a line in my life. But I love not their philosophy. In all sentiments that are impregnated with melancholy, and instil sadness as a moral, I question the wisdom and dispute the truth. There is no situation

in life which we cannot sweeten or embitter at will. If the past is gloomy, I do not see the necessity of dwelling upon it. If the mind can make one vigorous exertion, it can another: the same energy you put forth in acquiring knowledge would also enable you to baffle misfortune. Determine not to think upon what is painful; resolutely turn away from everything that recalls it; bend all your attention to some new and engrossing object; do this, and you defeat the past. You smile, as if this were impossible; yet it is not an iota more so than to tear one's self from a favourite pursuit, and addict one's self to an object unwelcome to one at first. This the mind does continually through life: so can it also do the other, if you will but make an equal exertion. Nor does it seem to me natural to the human heart to look *much* to the past: all its plans, its projects, its aspirations, are for the future; it is *for* the future, and *in* the future, that we live. Our very passions, when most agitated, are most anticipative. Revenge, avarice, ambition, love, the desire of good and evil, are all fixed and pointed to some distant goal: to look backwards is like walking backwards,—against our proper formation; the mind does not readily adopt the habit, and when once adopted it will readily return to its natural bias. Oblivion is, therefore, a more easily obtained boon than we imagine. Forgetfulness of the past is purchased by increasing our anxiety for the future."

I paused for a moment, but Glanville did not answer me; and, encouraged by a look from Ellen, I continued,—"You remember that, according to an old creed, if we were given memory as a curse, we were also given hope as a blessing. Counteract the one by the other. In my own life I have committed many weak, perhaps many wicked, actions; I have chased away their remembrance, though I have transplanted their warning to the future. As the body involuntarily avoids what is hurtful to it, without tracing the association to its first experience, so the mind insensibly shuns what has formerly afflicted it, even without palpably recalling the remembrance of the affliction.

"The Roman philosopher placed the secret of human hap-

piness in the one maxim, 'not to admire.' I never could exactly comprehend the sense of the moral: my maxim for the same object would be, 'never to regret.'"

"Alas! my dear friend," said Glanville, "we are great philosophers to each other, but not to ourselves; the moment we begin to *feel* sorrow, we cease to reflect on its wisdom. Time is the only comforter: your maxims are very true; but they confirm me in my opinion, that it is in vain for us to lay down fixed precepts for the regulation of the mind, so long as it is dependent upon the body. Happiness and its reverse are constitutional in many persons, and it is then only that they are independent of circumstances. Make the health, the frames of all men, alike; make their nerves of the same susceptibility, their memories of the same bluntness or acuteness,— and I will then allow that you can give rules adapted to all men; till then, your maxim, 'never to regret,' is as idle as Horace's 'never to admire.' It may be wise to you: it is impossible to me!"

With these last words Glanville's voice faltered, and I felt averse to push the argument further. Ellen's eye caught mine, and gave me a look so kind, and almost grateful, that I forgot everything else in the world. A few moments afterwards a friend of Lady Glanville was announced, and I left the room.

CHAPTER LV.

Intus, et in jecore ægro,
Nascuntur domini.—Persius.

The next two or three days I spent in visiting all my many friends in the Lower House, and engaging them to dine with me, preparatorily to the great act of voting on ——'s motion. I led them myself to the House of Commons, and not feeling sufficiently interested in the debate to remain as a stranger where I ought, in my own opinion, to have acted as a per-

former, I went to Brookes's to wait the result. Lord Gravelton, a stout, bluff, six-foot nobleman, with a voice like a Stentor, was "blowing up" the waiters in the coffee-room. Mr. ——, the author of ——, was conning the "Courier" in a corner; and Lord Armadilleros, the haughtiest and most honourable peer in the calendar, was monopolizing the drawing-room, with his right foot on one hob and his left on the other. I sat myself down in silence, and looked over the "crack article" in the "Edinburgh." By and by the room got fuller; every one spoke of the motion before the House, and anticipated the merits of the speeches and the numbers of the voters.

At last a principal member entered; a crowd gathered round him. "I have heard," he said, "the most extraordinary speech, for the combination of knowledge and imagination, that I ever recollect to have listened to."

"From Gaskell, I suppose!" was the universal cry.

"No," said Mr. ——; "Gaskell has not yet spoken. It was from a young man who has only just taken his seat. It was received with the most unanimous cheers, and was, indeed, a remarkable display."

"What is his name?" I asked, already half foreboding the answer.

"I only just learnt it as I left the House," replied Mr. ——; "the speaker was Sir Reginald Glanville."

Then, every one of those whom I had often before heard censure Glanville for his rudeness, or laugh at him for his eccentricity, opened their mouths in congratulations to their own wisdom, for having long admired his talents and predicted his success.

I left the "turba Remi sequens fortunam;" I felt agitated and feverish; those who have unexpectedly heard of the success of a man for whom great affection is blended with greater interest can understand the restlessness of mind with which I wandered into the streets. The air was cold and nipping. I was buttoning my coat round my chest, when I heard a voice say, "You have dropped your glove, Mr. Pelham."

The speaker was Thornton. I thanked him coldly for his

civility, and was going on, when he said, "If your way is up Pall Mall, I have no objection to join you for a few minutes."

I bowed with some *hauteur;* but, as I seldom refuse any opportunity of knowing more perfectly individual character, I said I should be happy of his company so long as our way lay together.

"It is a cold night, Mr. Pelham," said Thornton, after a pause. "I have been dining at Hatchett's with an old Paris acquaintance; I am sorry we did not meet more often in France, but I was so taken up with my friend Mr. Warburton."

As Thornton uttered that name he looked hard at me, and then added, "By the by, I saw you with Sir Reginald Glanville the other day; you know him well, I presume?"

"Tolerably well," said I, with indifference.

"What a strange character he is," rejoined Thornton; "*I* also have known him for some years," and again Thornton looked pryingly into my countenance. Poor fool! it was not for a penetration like his to read the *cor inscrutabile* of a man born and bred like me, in the consummate dissimulation of *bon ton.*

"He is very rich, is he not?" said Thornton, after a brief silence.

"I believe so," said I.

"Humph!" answered Thornton. "Things have grown better with him in proportion as they grew worse with me, who have had 'as good luck as the cow that stuck herself with her own horn.' I suppose he is not too anxious to recollect me: 'poverty parts fellowship.' Well, hang pride, say I; give me an honest heart all the year round, in summer or winter, drought or plenty. Would to Heaven some kind friend would lend me twenty pounds!"

To this wish I made no reply. Thornton sighed.

"Mr. Pelham," renewed he, "it is true I have known you but a short time,—excuse the liberty I take,—but if you *could* lend me a trifle, it would really assist me very much."

"Mr. Thornton," said I, "if I knew you better, and could

serve you more, you might apply to me for a more real assistance than any *bagatelle* I could afford you would be. If twenty pounds would really be of service to you, I will lend them to you, upon this condition, that you never ask me for another farthing."

Thornton's face brightened. "A thousand, thousand — " he began.

"No," interrupted I, "no thanks, only your promise."

"Upon my honour," said Thornton, "I will never ask you for another farthing."

"There *is* honour among thieves," thought I, and so I took out the sum mentioned, and gave it to him. In good earnest, though I disliked the man, his threadbare garments and altered appearance moved me to compassion. While he was pocketing the money, which he did with the most unequivocal delight, a tall figure passed us rapidly. We both turned at the same instant, and recognized Glanville. He had not gone seven yards beyond us, before we observed his steps, which were very irregular, pause suddenly; a moment afterwards he fell against the iron rails of an area; we hastened towards him; he was apparently fainting. His countenance was perfectly livid, and marked with the traces of extreme exhaustion. I sent Thornton to the nearest public-house for some water; before he returned Glanville had recovered.

"All — all — in vain," he said, slowly and unconsciously: "death is the only Lethe."

He started when he saw me. I made him lean on my arm, and we walked on slowly.

"I have already heard of your speech," said I. Glanville smiled with the usual faint and sickly expression, which made his smile painful even in its exceeding sweetness.

"You have also already seen its effects; the excitement was too much for me."

"It must have been a proud moment when you sat down," said I.

"It was one of the bitterest I ever felt: it was fraught with the memory of the dead. What are all honours to me now? — O God! O God! have mercy upon me!"

And Glanville stopped suddenly, and put his hand to his temples.

By this time Thornton had joined us. When Glanville's eyes rested upon him, a deep hectic rose slowly and gradually over his cheeks. Thornton's lip curled with a malicious expression; Glanville marked it, and his brow grew on the moment as black as night.

"Begone!" he said in a loud voice, and with a flashing eye, "begone instantly; I loathe the very sight of so base a thing."

Thornton's quick, restless eye grew like a living coal, and he bit his lip so violently that the blood gushed out. He made, however, no other answer than—

"You seem agitated to-night, Sir Reginald; I wish your speedy restoration to better health. Mr. Pelham, your servant."

Glanville walked on in silence till we came to his door; we parted there; and for want of anything better to do, I sauntered towards the M—— hell. There were only about ten or twelve persons in the rooms, and all were gathered round the hazard table. I looked on silently, seeing the knaves devour the fools, and younger brothers make up in wit for the deficiencies of fortune.

The Honourable Mr. Blagrave came up to me. "Do you never play?" said he.

"Sometimes," was my brief reply.

"Lend me a hundred pounds!" rejoined my kind acquaintance.

"I was just going to make you the same request," said I.

Blagrave laughed heartily. "Well," said he, "be my security to a Jew, and I'll be yours. My fellow lends me money at only forty per cent. My governor is a d—d stingy old fellow, for I am the most moderate son in the universe. I neither hunt nor race, nor have I any one favourite expense, except gambling, and he won't satisfy me in that; now I call such conduct shameful!"

"Unheard-of barbarity," said I; "and you do well to ruin your property by Jews, before you have it; you could not avenge yourself better on 'the governor.'"

"No, hang it," said Blagrave, "leave me alone for that! Well, I have got five pounds left; I shall go and slap it down."

No sooner had he left me than I was accosted by Mr. ——, a handsome adventurer, who lived the devil knew how, for the devil seemed to take excellent care of him.

"Poor Blagrave!" said he, eying the countenance of that ingenious youth. "He is a strange fellow; he asked me the other day, if I ever read the 'History of England,' and told me there was a great deal in it about his ancestor, a Roman general, in the time of William the Conqueror, called Caractacus. He told me at the last Newmarket, that he had made up a capital book, and it turned out that he had hedged with such dexterity that he *must* lose one thousand pounds and he *might* lose two. Well, well," continued ——, with a sanctified expression, "I would sooner see those real fools here than the confounded scoundrels who pillage one under a false appearance. Never, Mr. Pelham, trust to a man at a gaming-house; the honestest look hides the worst sharper! Shall you try your luck to-night?"

"No," said I. "I shall only look on."

—— sauntered to the table, and sat down next to a rich young man, of the best temper and worst luck in the world. After a few throws, —— said to him, "Lord ——, do put your money aside—you have so much upon the table that it interferes with mine; and that is really *so* unpleasant. Suppose you put some of it in your pocket."

Lord —— took a handful of notes and stuffed them carelessly in his coat-pocket. Five minutes afterwards I saw —— insert his hand, *empty*, in his neighbour's pocket, and bring it out *full;* and half an hour afterwards he handed over a fifty-pound note to the marker, saying, "There, sir, is my debt to you. God bless me, Lord ——, how you *have* won; I wish you would not leave all your money about; do put it in your pocket with the rest."

Lord —— (who had perceived the trick, though he was too indolent to resist it) laughed. "No, no, ——," said he, "you must let me keep *some!*"

—— coloured, and soon after rose. "D—n my luck!" said he, as he passed me. "I wonder I continue to play; but there are such sharpers in the room. Avoid a gaming-house, Mr. Pelham, if you wish to live."

"And *let* live," thought I.

I was just going away, when I heard a loud laugh on the stairs, and immediately afterwards Thornton entered, joking with one of the markers. He did not see me; but approaching the table, drew out the identical twenty-pound note I had given him, and asked for change with the air of a *millionaire.*

I did not wait to witness his fortune, good or ill; I cared too little about it. I descended the stairs, and the servant, on opening the door for me, admitted Sir John Tyrrell. "What," I thought, "is the habit *still* so strong?" We stopped each other; and, after a few words of greeting, I went, once more, upstairs with him.

Thornton was playing as eagerly with his small quota as Lord C—— with his ten thousands. He nodded with an affected air of familiarity to Tyrrell, who returned his salutation with the most supercilious *hauteur;* and very soon afterwards the baronet was utterly engrossed by the chances of the game. I had, however, satisfied my curiosity, in ascertaining that there was no longer any intimacy between him and Thornton, and accordingly once more I took my departure.

CHAPTER LVI.

> The times have been
> That when the brains were out, the man would die,
> And there an end; but now they rise again.—*Macbeth.*

It was a strange thing to see a man like Glanville, with costly tastes, luxurious habits, great talents peculiarly calculated for display, courted by the highest members of the state,

admired for his beauty and genius by half the women in London, yet living in the most ascetic seclusion from his kind, and indulging in the darkest and most morbid despondency. No female was ever seen to win even his momentary glance of admiration. All the senses appeared to have lost, for him, their customary allurements. He lived among his books, and seemed to make his favourite companions amidst the past. At nearly all hours of the night he was awake and occupied, and at daybreak his horse was always brought to his door. He rode alone for several hours, and then, on his return, he was employed, till the hour he went to the House, in the affairs and politics of the day. Ever since his *début*, he had entered with much constancy into the more leading debates, and his speeches were invariably of the same commanding order which had characterized his first.

It was singular that, in his parliamentary display as in his ordinary conversation, there were none of the wild and speculative opinions or the burning enthusiasm of romance, in which the natural inclination of his mind seemed so essentially to delight. His arguments were always remarkable for the soundness of the principles on which they were based, and the logical clearness with which they were expressed. The feverish fervour of his temperament was, it is true, occasionally shown in a remarkable energy of delivery, or a sudden and unexpected burst of the more impetuous powers of oratory; but these were so evidently natural and spontaneous, and so happily adapted to be impressive of the subject, rather than irrelevant from its bearings, that they never displeased even the oldest and coldest cynics and calculators of the House.

It is no uncommon contradiction in human nature (and in Glanville it seemed peculiarly prominent) to find men of imagination and genius gifted with the strongest common-sense, for the admonition or benefit of *others*, even while constantly neglecting to exert it for themselves. He was soon marked out as the most promising and important of all the junior members of the House; and the coldness with which he kept aloof from social intercourse with the party he adopted only

served to increase their respect, though it prevented their affection.

Lady Roseville's attachment to him was scarcely a secret; the celebrity of her name in the world of *ton* made her least look or action the constant subject of present remark and after conversation: and there were too many moments, even in the watchful publicity of society, when that charming but imprudent person forgot everything but the romance of her attachment. Glanville seemed not only perfectly untouched by it, but even wholly unconscious of its existence, and preserved invariably, whenever he was forced into the crowd, the same stern, cold, unsympathizing reserve, which made him at once an object of universal conversation and dislike.

Three weeks after Glanville's first speech in the House I called upon him with a proposal from Lord Dawton. After we had discussed it, we spoke on more familiar topics, and at last he mentioned Thornton. It will be observed that we had never conversed respecting that person; nor had Glanville once alluded to our former meetings, or to his disguised appearance and false appellation at Paris. Whatever might be the mystery, it was evidently of a painful nature, and it was not, therefore, for me to allude to it. This day he spoke of Thornton with a tone of indifference.

"The man," he said, "I have known for some time; he was useful to me abroad, and, notwithstanding his character, I rewarded him well for his services. He has since applied to me several times for money, which is spent at the gambling-house as soon as it is obtained. I believe him to be leagued with a gang of sharpers of the lowest description; and I am really unwilling any further to supply the vicious necessities of himself and his comrades. He is a mean, mercenary rascal, who would scruple at no enormity, provided he was paid for it!"

Glanville paused for a few moments, and then added, while his cheek blushed, and his voice seemed somewhat hesitating and embarrassed,—

"You remember Mr. Tyrrell, at Paris?"

"Yes," said I; "he is at present in London, and—"

Glanville started as if he had been shot.

"No, no," he exclaimed wildly—"he died at Paris, from want—from starvation."

"You are mistaken," said I; "he is now Sir John Tyrrell, and possessed of considerable property. I saw him myself three weeks ago."

Glanville, laying his hand upon my arm, looked in my face with a long, stern, prying gaze, and his cheek grew more ghastly and livid with every moment. At last he turned, and muttered something between his teeth; and at that moment the door opened, and Thornton was announced. Glanville sprang towards him, and seized him by the throat.

"Dog!" he cried, "you have deceived me: Tyrrell lives!"

"Hands off!" cried the gamester, with a savage grin of defiance,—"hands off! or, by the Lord that made me, you shall have gripe for gripe!"

"Ho, wretch!" said Glanville, shaking him violently, while his worn and slender, yet still powerful, frame trembled with the excess of his passion; "dost thou dare to threaten me!" and with these words he flung Thornton against the opposite wall with such force that the blood gushed out of his mouth and nostrils. The gambler rose slowly, and, wiping the blood from his face, fixed his malignant and fiery eye upon his aggressor, with an expression of collected hate and vengeance that made my very blood creep.

"It is not my day *now*," he said, with a calm, quiet, cold voice; and then, suddenly changing his manner, he approached me with a sort of bow, and made some remark on the weather.

Meanwhile, Glanville had sunk on the sofa exhausted, less by his late effort than the convulsive passion which had produced it. He rose in a few moments, and said to Thornton, "Pardon my violence; let this pay your bruises;" and he placed a long and apparently well-filled purse in Thornton's hand. That *véritable philosophe* took it with the same air as a dog receives the first caress from the hand which has just chastised him; and feeling the purse between his short, hard fingers, as if to ascertain the soundness of its condition,

quickly slid it into his breeches pocket, which he then buttoned with care, and pulling his waistcoat down, as if for further protection to the deposit, he turned towards Glanville, and said, in his usual quaint style of vulgarity,—

"Least said, Sir Reginald, the soonest mended. Gold is a good plaster for bad bruises. Now then, your will: ask and I will answer, unless you think Mr. Pelham *de trop.*"

I was already at the door, with the intention of leaving the room, when Glanville cried, "Stay, Pelham, I have but one question to ask Mr. Thornton. Is John Tyrrell still living?"

"He is!" answered Thornton, with a sardonic smile.

"And beyond all want?" resumed Glanville.

"He is!" was the tautological reply.

"Mr. Thornton," said Glanville, with a calm voice, "I have now done with you; you may leave the room!"

Thornton bowed with an air of ironical respect, and obeyed the command.

I turned to look at Glanville. His countenance, always better adapted to a stern than a soft expression, was perfectly fearful: every line in it seemed dug into a furrow; the brows were bent over his large and flashing eyes with a painful intensity of anger and resolve; his teeth were clenched firmly as if by a vice; and the thin upper lip, which was drawn from them with a bitter curl of scorn, was as white as death. His right hand had closed upon the back of the chair, over which his tall, nervous frame leaned, and was grasping it with an iron force, which it could not support: it snapped beneath his hand like a hazel stick. This accident, slight as it was, recalled him to himself. He apologized with apparent self-possession for his disorder; and, after a few words of fervent and affectionate farewell on my part, I left him to the solitude which I knew he desired.

CHAPTER LVII.

WHILE I seemed only intent upon pleasure, I locked in my heart the consciousness and vanity of power; in the levity of the lip, I disguised the knowledge of the workings of the brain; and I looked, as with a gifted eye, upon the mystery of the hidden depths, while I seemed to float an idler with the herd only upon the surface of the stream. — FALKLAND.

As I walked home, revolving the scene I had witnessed, the words of Tyrrell came into my recollection; namely, that the cause of Glanville's dislike to him had arisen in Tyrrell's greater success in some youthful *liaison*. In this account I could not see much probability. In the first place, the cause was not sufficient to produce such an effect; and, in the second, there was little likelihood that the young and rich Glanville, possessed of the most various accomplishments and the most remarkable personal beauty, should be supplanted by a needy spendthrift (as Tyrrell at that time was) of coarse manners and unpolished mind; with a person, not indeed unprepossessing, but somewhat touched by time, and never more comparable to Glanville's than that of the Satyr to Hyperion.

While I was meditating over a mystery which excited my curiosity more powerfully than anything not relating to himself ought ever to occupy the attention of a wise man, I was accosted by Vincent; the difference in our politics had of late much dissevered us, and when he took my arm, and drew me up Bond Street, I was somewhat surprised at his condescension.

"Listen to me, Pelham," he said; "once more I offer you a settlement in our colony. There will be great changes soon: trust me, so radical a party as that you have adopted can never come in; ours, on the contrary, is no less moderate than liberal. This is the last time of asking; for I know you will soon have exposed your opinions in public more openly

than you have yet done, and then it will be too late. At present I hold, with Hudibras and the ancients, that it is

> "'More honourable far, *servare*
> *Civem*, than slay an adversary.'"

"Alas, Vincent," said I, "I am marked out for slaughter, for you cannot convince me by words, and so, I suppose, you must conquer me by blows. Adieu, this is my way to Lord Dawton's; where are you going?"

"To mount my horse, and join the *parça* juventus," said Vincent, with a laugh at his own witticism, as we shook hands and parted.

I grieve much, my beloved reader, that I cannot unfold to thee all the particulars of my political intrigue. I am, by the very share which fell to my lot, bound over to the strictest secrecy as to its nature and the characters of the chief agents in its execution. Suffice it to say that the greater part of my time was, though furtively, employed in a sort of home diplomacy, gratifying alike to the activity of my tastes and the vanity of my mind. I had filled Dawton and his coadjutors with an exaggerated opinion of my abilities; but I knew well how to sustain it. I rose by candlelight, and consumed, in the intensest application, the hours which every other individual of our party wasted in enervating slumbers from the hesternal dissipation or debauch. Was there a question in political economy debated, mine was the readiest and the clearest reply. Did a period in our constitution become investigated, it was I to whom the duty of expositor was referred. From Madame d'Anville, with whom (though lost as a lover) I constantly corresponded as a friend, I obtained the earliest and most accurate detail of the prospects and manœuvres of the court in which her life was spent, and in whose more secret offices her husband was employed. I spared no means of extending my knowledge of every the minutest point which could add to the reputation I enjoyed. I made myself acquainted with the individual interests and exact circumstances of all whom it was our object to intimidate or to gain. It was I who brought to the House the younger and idler

members, whom no more nominally powerful agent could allure from the ballroom or the gaming-house.

In short, while, by the dignity of my birth and the independent *hauteur* of my bearing, I preserved the rank of an equal amongst the highest of the set, I did not scruple to take upon myself the labour and activity of the most subordinate. Dawton declared me his right hand; and, though I knew myself rather his head than his hand, I pretended to feel proud of the appellation.

Meanwhile, it was my pleasure to wear in society the eccentric costume of character I had first adopted, and to cultivate the arts which won from women the smile that cheered and encouraged me in my graver contest with men. It was only to Ellen Glanville that I laid aside an affectation which I knew was little likely to attract a taste so refined and unadulterated as hers. I discovered in her a mind which, while it charmed me by its tenderness and freshness, elevated me by its loftiness of thought. She was, at heart, perhaps as ambitious as myself; but while my aspirations were concealed by affectation, hers were softened by her timidity and purified by her religion. There were moments when I opened myself to her, and caught a new spirit from her look of sympathy and enthusiasm.

"Yes," thought I, "I do long for honours, but it is that I may ask her to share and ennoble them." In fine, I loved as other men loved; and I fancied a perfection in her, and vowed an emulation in myself, which it was reserved for time to ratify or deride.

Where did I leave myself? as the Irishman said,—on my road to Lord Dawton's. I was lucky enough to find that personage at home; he was writing at a table covered with pamphlets and books of reference.

"Hush! Pelham," said his lordship, who is a quiet, grave, meditative little man, always ruminating on a very small cud, —"hush! or *do* oblige me by looking over this history, to find out the date of the Council of Pisa."

"That will do, my young friend," said his lordship, after I had furnished him with the information he required; "I

wish to Heaven I could finish this pamphlet by to-morrow: it is intended as an answer to ——. But I am so perplexed with business, that—"

"Perhaps," said I, "if you will pardon my interrupting you, I can throw your observations together,— make your Sibylline leaves into a book. Your lordship will find the matter, and I will not spare the trouble."

Lord Dawton was profuse in his thanks; he explained the subject, and left the arrangement wholly to me. He could not presume to dictate. I promised him, if he lent me the necessary books, to finish the pamphlet against the following evening.

"And now," said Lord Dawton, "that we have settled this affair, what news from France?"

. . . . . .

"I wish," sighed Lord Dawton, as we were calculating our forces, "that we could gain over Lord Guloseton."

"What, the facetious epicure?" said I.

"The same," answered Dawton: "we want him as a dinner-giver; and, besides, he has four votes in the Lower House."

"Well," said I, "he is indolent and independent: it is not impossible."

"Do you know him?" answered Dawton.

"No," said I.

Dawton sighed. "And young A——?" said the statesman, after a pause.

"Has an expensive mistress, and races. Your lordship might be sure of him were you in power, and sure not to have him while you are out of it."

"And B——?" rejoined Dawton.

. . . . . .

CHAPTER LVIII.

MANGEZ-VOUS bien, Monsieur?
Oui, et bois encore mieux. — *Mons. de Porceaugnac.*

MY pamphlet took prodigiously. The authorship was attributed to one of the ablest members of the Opposition; and though there were many errors in style, and (I *now* think; *then* I did not, or I should not have written them) many sophisms in the reasoning, yet it carried the end proposed by all ambition of whatever species, and imposed upon the taste of the public.

Some time afterwards I was going down the stairs at Almack's, when I heard an altercation, high and grave, at the door of reception. To my surprise I found Lord Guloseton and a very young man in great wrath; the latter had never been to Almack's before, and had forgotten his ticket. Guloseton, who belonged to a very different set from that of the Almackians, insisted that his word was enough to bear his juvenile companion through. The ticket-inspector was irate and obdurate, and, having seldom or never seen Lord Guloseton himself, paid very little respect to his authority.

As I was wrapping myself in my cloak, Guloseton turned to me; for passion makes men open their hearts: too eager for an opportunity of acquiring the epicure's acquaintance, I offered to get his friend admittance in an instant; the offer was delightedly accepted, and I soon procured a small piece of pencilled paper from Lady —— which effectually silenced the Charon, and opened the Stygian *via* to the Elysium beyond.

Guloseton overwhelmed me with his thanks. I remounted the stairs with him, took every opportunity of ingratiating myself, received an invitation to dinner on the following

day, and left Willis's transported at the goodness of my fortune.

At the hour of eight on the ensuing evening, I had just made my entrance in Lord Guloseton's drawing-room. It was a small apartment, furnished with great luxury and some taste. A "Venus" of Titian's was placed over the chimney-piece, in all the gorgeous voluptuousness of her unveiled beauty: the pouting lip, not *silent* though *shut;* the eloquent lid drooping over the eye, whose glances you could so easily imagine; the arms, the limbs, the attitude so composed yet so full of life,—all seemed to indicate that sleep was not forgetfulness, and that the dreams of the goddess were not wholly inharmonious with the waking realities in which it was her gentle prerogative to indulge. On either side was a picture of the delicate and golden hues of Claude; these were the only landscapes in the room; the remaining pictures were more suitable to the "Venus" of the luxurious Italian. Here was one of the beauties of Sir Peter Lely: there was an admirable copy of the "Hero and Leander." On the table lay the "Basia of Johannes Secundus," and a few French works on gastronomy.

As for the *genius loci*, you must imagine a middle-sized, middle-aged man, with an air rather of delicate than florid health. But little of the effects of his good cheer were apparent in the external man. His cheeks were neither swollen nor inflated; his person, though not thin, was of no unwieldy obesity; the tip of his nasal organ was, it is true, of a more ruby tinge than the rest, and one carbuncle, of tender age and gentle dyes, diffused its mellow and moonlight influence over the physiognomical scenery; his forehead was high and bald, and the few locks which still rose above it were carefully and gracefully curled *à l'antique.* Beneath a pair of gray shaggy brows (which their noble owner had a strange habit of raising and depressing, according to the nature of his remarks), rolled two very small, piercing, arch, restless orbs, of a tender green; and the mouth, which was wide and thick-lipped, was expressive of great sensuality, and curved upwards in a perpetual smile.

Such was Lord Guloseton. To my surprise no other guest but myself appeared.

"A new friend," said he, as we descended into the dining-room, "is like a new dish: one must have him all to one's self, thoroughly to enjoy and rightly to understand him."

"A noble precept," said I, with enthusiasm. "Of all vices, indiscriminate hospitality is the most pernicious. It allows neither conversation nor dinner, and, realizing the mythological fable of Tantalus, gives us starvation in the midst of plenty."

"You are right," said Guloseton, solemnly; "I never ask above six persons to dinner, and I never dine out: for a bad dinner, Mr. Pelham, a bad dinner is the most serious — I may add, *the* most serious calamity."

"Yes," I replied, "for it carries with it no consolation; a buried friend may be replaced, a lost mistress renewed, a slandered character be recovered, even a broken constitution restored: but a dinner once lost is irremediable; that day is forever departed; an appetite once thrown away can never, till the cruel prolixity of the gastric agents is over, be regained. 'Il y a tant de maîtresses' (says the admirable Corneille), 'il n'y a qu'un *dîner.*'"

"You speak like an oracle,— *like the Cook's Oracle,* Mr. Pelham: may I send you some soup? it is *à la Carmelite.* But what are you about to do with that case?"

"It contains," said I, "my spoon, my knife, and my fork. Nature afflicted me with a propensity, which, through these machines, I have endeavoured to remedy by art. I eat with *too great a rapidity.* It is a most unhappy failing, for one often hurries over in *one* minute what ought to have afforded the fullest delight for the period of *five.* It is, indeed, a vice which deadens enjoyment as well as abbreviates it; it is a shameful waste of the gifts, and a melancholy perversion of the bounty, of Providence. My conscience tormented me; but the habit, fatally indulged in early childhood, was not easy to overcome. At last I resolved to construct a spoon of peculiarly shallow dimensions, a fork so small that it could only raise a certain portion to my mouth, and a knife rendered

blunt and jagged, so that it required a proper and just time to carve the goods 'the gods provide me.' My lord, 'the lovely Thais sits beside me,' in the form of a bottle of madeira. Suffer me to take wine with you."

"With pleasure, my good friend; let us drink to the memory of the Carmelites, to whom we are indebted for this inimitable soup."

"Yes," I cried. "Let *us* for once shake off the prejudices of sectarian faith, and do justice to one order of those incomparable men, who, retiring from the cares of an idle and sinful world, gave themselves with undivided zeal and attention to the theory and practice of the profound science of gastronomy. It is reserved for us to pay a grateful tribute of memory to those exalted recluses, who, through a long period of barbarism and darkness, preserved in the solitude of their cloisters whatever of Roman luxury and classic dainties have come down to this later age. We will drink to the Carmelites as a sect, but we will drink also to the monks as a body. Had we lived in those days, we had been monks ourselves!"

"It is singular," answered Lord Guloseton — "by the by, what think you of this turbot? — to trace the history of the kitchen; it affords the greatest scope to the philosopher and the moralist. The ancients seemed to have been more mental, more imaginative, than we are, in their dishes; they fed their bodies as well as their minds upon delusion: for instance, they esteemed beyond all price the tongues of nightingales, because they tasted the very music of the birds in the organs of their utterance. That is what I call the very poetry of gastronomy!"

"Yes," said I, with a sigh, "they certainly had, in some respects, the advantage over us. Who can pore over the suppers of Apicius without the fondest regret? The venerable Ude[1] implies that the study has not progressed. 'Cookery (he says, in the first part of his work) possesses but few innovators.'"

"It is with the greatest diffidence," said Guloseton (his mouth full of truth and turbot), "that we may dare to differ

[1] Qu. The venerable Bede? — PRINTER'S DEVIL.

from so great an authority. Indeed, so high is my veneration for that wise man, that if all the evidence of my sense and reason were on one side, and the dictum of the great Ude upon the other, I should be inclined — I think I *should be determined* — to relinquish the former and adopt the latter."[1]

"Bravo, Lord Guloseton," cried I, warmly. "'Qu'un cuisinier est un mortel divin!' Why should we not be proud of our knowledge in cookery? It is the soul of festivity at all times, and to all ages. How many marriages have been the consequence of meeting at dinner! How much good fortune has been the result of a good supper! At what moment of our existence are we happier than at table? There hatred and animosity are lulled to sleep, and pleasure alone reigns. Here the cook, by his skill and attention, anticipates our wishes in the happiest selection of the best dishes and decorations. Here our wants are satisfied, our minds and bodies invigorated, and ourselves qualified for the high delights of love, music, poetry, dancing, and other pleasures; and is he whose talents have produced these happy effects to rank no higher in the scale of man than a common servant?[2]

"'Yes,' cries the venerable professor himself, in a virtuous and prophetic paroxysm of indignant merit — 'yes, my disciples, if you adopt, and attend to, the rules I have laid down, the self-love of mankind will consent at last that cookery shall rank in the class of the sciences, and its professors deserve the name of artists!'"[3]

"My dear, dear sir," exclaimed Guloseton, with a kindred glow, "I discover in you a spirit similar to my own. Let us drink long life to the venerable Ude!"

"I pledge you with all my soul," said I, filling my glass to the brim.

"What a pity," rejoined Guloseton, "that Ude, whose *practical* science was so perfect, should ever have written, or suffered others to write, the work published under his name; true it is that the opening part, which you have so feelingly

[1] See the speech of Mr. Brougham in honor of Mr. Fox.
[2] Ude, verbatim. [3] Ibid.

recited, is composed with a grace, a charm, beyond the reach of art; but the instructions are vapid and frequently so erroneous as to make us suspect their authenticity; but, after all, cooking is not capable of becoming a written science,—it is the philosophy of practice!"

"Ah! by Lucullus," exclaimed I, interrupting my host, "what a visionary *béchamelle!* Oh, the inimitable sauce! these chickens are indeed worthy of the honour of being dressed. Never, my lord, as long as you live, eat a chicken in the country: excuse a pun, you will have *foul* fare.

"'J'ai toujours redouté la volaille perfide,
Qui brave les efforts d'une dent intrépide.
Souvent, par un ami dans ses champs entraîné
J'ai reconnu le soir le coq infortuné
Qui m'avait le matin à l'aurore naissante
Réveillé brusquement de sa voix glapissante;
Je l'avais admiré dans le sein de la cour;
Avec des yeux jaloux, j'avais vu son amour.
Hélas! le malheureux, abjurant sa tendresse,
Exerçait au souper sa fureur vengeresse.'[1]

"Pardon the prolixity of my quotation for the sake of its value."

"I do, I do," answered Guloseton, laughing at the humour of the lines: till, suddenly checking himself he said, "we must be grave, Mr. Pelham, it will never do to laugh. What would become of our digestions?"

"True," said I, relapsing into seriousness; "and if you will allow me one more quotation, you will see what my author adds with regard to my abrupt interruption.

[1] "Ever I dread (when duped a day to spend
At his snug villa, by some fatal friend)
Grim chanticleer, whose breast devoid of ruth
Braves the stout effort of the desperate tooth;
Oft have I recognized, at eve, the bird
Whose morning notes my ear prophetic heard,
Whose tender courtship won my pained regard,
Amidst the plumed seraglio of the yard.
Tender no more — behold him in your plate —
And know, while eating, you avenge his fate."

"'Défendez que personne, au milieu d'un banquet,
Ne vous vienne donner un avis indiscret;
Écartez ce fâcheux qui vers vous s'achemine;
Rien ne doit déranger l'honnête homme qui dine.'"[1]

"Admirable advice," said Guloseton, toying with a *filet mignon de poulet.* "Do you remember an example in the Bailly of Suffren, who, being in India, was waited upon by a deputation of natives while he was at dinner? 'Tell them,' said he, 'that the Christian religion peremptorily forbids every Christian, while at table, to occupy himself with any earthly subject, except the function of eating.' The deputation retired in the profoundest respect at the exceeding devotion of the French general."

"Well," said I, after we had chuckled gravely and quietly, with the care of our digestion before us, for a few minutes, — "well, however good the invention was, the idea is not entirely new, for the Greeks esteemed eating and drinking plentifully a sort of offering to the gods; and Aristotle explains the very word, θοῖναι, or feasts, by an etymological exposition, '*that it was thought a duty to the gods to be drunk;*' no bad idea of our classical patterns of antiquity. Polyphemé, too, in the "Cyclops" of Euripides, no doubt a very sound theologian, says his stomach is his only deity; and Xenophon tells us, that as the Athenians exceeded all other people in the number of their gods, so they exceeded them also in the number of their feasts. May I send your lordship a quail?"

"Pelham, my boy," said Guloseton, whose eyes began to roll and twinkle with a brilliancy suited to the various liquids which ministered to their rejoicing orbs, "I love you for your classics. Polyphemé was a wise fellow, a very wise fellow, and it was a terrible shame in Ulysses to put out his eye! No wonder that the ingenious savage made a deity of his stomach; to what known visible sauce, on this earth, was

[1] "At meals no access to the indiscreet;
All are intruders on the wise who eat.
In that blest hour, your bore 's the veriest sinner!
Nought must disturb a man of worth — at dinner."

he indebted for a keener enjoyment,— a more rapturous and a more constant delight? No wonder he honoured it with his gratitude, and supplied it with his peace-offerings: let us imitate so great an example; let us make our digestive receptacles a temple, to which we will consecrate the choicest goods we possess; let us conceive no pecuniary sacrifice too great which procures for our altar an acceptable gift; let us deem it an impiety to hesitate, if a sauce seems extravagant or an ortolan too dear; and let our last act in this sublunary existence be a solemn festival in honor of our unceasing benefactor!"

"Amen to your creed!" said I: "edibilatory Epicurism holds the key to all morality: for do we not see now how sinful it is to yield to an obscene and exaggerated intemperance? Would it not be to the last degree ungrateful to the great source of our enjoyment to overload it with a weight which would oppress it with languor or harass it with pain; and finally to drench away the effects of our impiety with some nauseous potation which revolts it, tortures it, convulses, irritates, enfeebles it, through every particle of its system? How wrong in us to give way to anger, jealousy, revenge, or any evil passion; for does not all that affects the mind operate also upon the stomach? And how can we be so vicious, so obdurate, as to forget, for a momentary indulgence, our debt to what you have so justly designated our perpetual benefactor?"

"Right," said Lord Guloseton, "a bumper to the Morality of the Stomach."

The dessert was now on the table. "I have dined well," said Guloseton, stretching his legs with an air of supreme satisfaction; "but" — and here my philosopher sighed deeply — "we cannot *dine again till to-morrow!* Happy, happy, happy common people, who can eat supper! Would to Heaven that I might have one boon,— perpetual appetite, a digestive Houri which renewed its virginity every time it was touched. Alas! for the instability of human enjoyment. But now that we have no immediate hope to anticipate, let us cultivate the pleasures of memory. What thought you of the *veau à la Dauphine?*"

"Pardon me if I hesitate at giving my opinion till I have corrected my judgment by yours."

"Why, then, I own I was somewhat displeased — disappointed, as it were — with that dish: the fact is, veal ought to be killed in its very first infancy; they suffer it to grow to too great an age. It becomes a sort of *hobbydehoy*, and possesses nothing of veal but its insipidity, or of beef but its toughness."

"Yes," said I, "it is only in their veal that the French surpass us; their other meats want the ruby juices and elastic freshness of ours. Monsieur L—— allowed this truth, with a candour worthy of his vast mind. *Mon Dieu!* what claret! — what a body! — and, let me add, what a *soul* beneath it! Who would *drink* wine like this? it is only made to *taste*. It is the first love, — too pure for the eagerness of enjoyment; the rapture it inspires is in a touch, a kiss. It is a pity, my lord, that we do not serve perfumes at dessert; it is their appropriate place. In confectionery (delicate invention of the Sylphs) we imitate the forms of the rose and the jasmine; why not their odours too? What is Nature without its scents? And as long as they are absent from our desserts it is in vain that the bard exclaims, —

"'L'observateur de la belle Nature
S'extasie en voyant des fleurs en confiture.'"

"It is an exquisite idea of yours," said Guloseton; "and the next time you dine here we will have perfumes. Dinner ought to be a reunion of all the senses, —

"'Gladness to the ear, nerve, heart, and sense.'"

There was a momentary pause. "My lord," said I, "what a lusty lusciousness in this pear! it is like the style of the old English poets. What think you of the seeming good understanding between Mr. Gaskell and the Whigs?"

"I trouble myself little about it," replied Guloseton, helping himself to some preserves: "politics disturb the digestion."

"Well," thought I, "I must ascertain some point in this man's character easier to handle than his epicurism: all men are vain; let us find out the peculiar vanity of mine host."

"The ultra-Tories," said I, "seem to think themselves exceedingly secure; they attach no importance to the neutral members; it was but the other day Lord —— told me that he did not care a straw for Mr. ——, notwithstanding he possessed *four* votes. Heard you ever such arrogance?"

"No, indeed," said Guloseton, with a lazy air of indifference; "are you a favorer of the olive?"

"No," said I, "I love it not: it hath an under taste of sourness, and an upper of oil, which do not make harmony to my palate. But, as I was saying, the Whigs, on the contrary, pay the utmost deference to their partisans; and a man of fortune, rank, and parliamentary influence might have all the power, without the trouble, of a leader."

"Very likely," said Guloseton, drowsily.

"I must change my battery," thought I, but while I was meditating a new attack, the following note was brought me:

For Heaven's sake, Pelham, come out to me: I am waiting in the street to see you: come directly, or it will be too late to render me the service I would ask of you.

R. Glanville.

I rose instantly. "You must excuse me, Lord Guloseton, I am called suddenly away."

"Ha! ha!" laughed the gourmand; "some tempting viand *post prandia Callirhoë!*"

"My good lord," said I, not heeding his insinuation, "I leave you with the greatest regret."

"And I part from you with the same; it is a real pleasure to see such a person at dinner."

"Adieu! my host; 'Je vais vivre et manger en sage.'"

CHAPTER LIX.

I DO defy him, and I spit at him,
Call him a slanderous coward and a villain, —
Which to maintain I will allow him odds. — SHAKSPEARE.

I FOUND Glanville walking before the door with a rapid and uneven step.

"Thank Heaven!" he said, when he saw me; "I have been twice to Mivart's to find you. The second time, I saw your servant, who told me where you were gone. I knew you well enough to be sure of your kindness."

Glanville broke off abruptly; and after a short pause, said, with a quick, low, hurried tone, — "The office I wish you to take upon yourself is this; go immediately to Sir John Tyrrell, with a challenge from me. Ever since I last saw you, I have been hunting out that man, and in vain. He had then left town. He returned this evening, and quits it to-morrow: you have no time to lose."

"My dear Glanville," said I, "I have no wish to learn any secret you would conceal from me; but forgive me if I ask some further instructions than those you have afforded me. Upon what plea am I to call out Sir John Tyrrell? and what answer am I to give to any excuses he may make?"

"I have anticipated your reply," said Glanville, with ill-subdued impatience: "you have only to give this paper; it will prevent all discussion. Read it; I have left it unsealed for that purpose."

I cast my eyes over the lines Glanville thrust into my hand; they ran thus: —

The time has at length come for me to demand the atonement so long delayed. The bearer of this, who is probably known to you, will arrange, with any person you may appoint, the hour and place of our meeting. He is unacquainted with the grounds of my complaint against you, but

he is satisfied of my honour: your second will, I presume, be the same with respect to *yours*. It is for me only to question the latter, and to declare you solemnly to be void alike of principle and courage, a villain and a poltroon.

REGINALD GLANVILLE.

"You are my earliest friend," said I, when I had read this soothing epistle; "and I will not flinch from the place you assign me; but I tell you fairly and frankly, that I would sooner cut off my right hand than suffer it to give this note to Sir John Tyrrell."

Glanville made no answer; we walked on till, suddenly stopping, he said, "My carriage is at the corner of the street: you must go instantly; Tyrrell lodges at the Clarendon; you will find me at home on your return."

I pressed his hand, and hurried on my mission. It was, I own, one peculiarly unwelcome and displeasing. In the first place, I did not love to be made a party in a business of the nature of which I was so profoundly ignorant. Secondly, if the affair terminated fatally, the world would not lightly condemn me for conveying to a gentleman of birth and fortune a letter so insulting, and for causes of which I was so ignorant. Again, too, Glanville was more dear to me than any one, judging only of my external character, would suppose; and, constitutionally indifferent as I am to danger for myself, I trembled like a woman at the peril I was instrumental in bringing upon him. But what weighed upon me far more than any of these reflections, was the recollection of Ellen. Should her brother fall in an engagement in which I was his supposed adviser, with what success could I hope for those feelings from her which, at present, constituted the tenderest and the brightest of my hopes? In the midst of these disagreeable ideas, the carriage stopped at the door of Tyrrell's hotel.

The waiter said Sir John was in the coffee-room; thither I immediately marched. Seated in the box nearest the fire sat Tyrrell, and two men of that old-fashioned *roué* set, whose members indulged in debauchery as if it were an attribute of manliness, and esteemed it, as long as it was hearty and

English, rather a virtue to boast of than a vice to disown. Tyrrell nodded to me familiarly as I approached him; and I saw, by the half-emptied bottles before him, and the flush of his sallow countenance, that he had not been sparing of his libations. I whispered that I wished to speak to him on a subject of great importance; he rose with much reluctance, and, after swallowing a large tumblerful of port wine to fortify him for the task, he led the way to a small room, where he seated himself, and asked me, with his usual mixture of bluntness and good-breeding, the nature of my business. I made him no reply: I contented myself with placing Glanville's *billet doux* in his hand. The room was dimly lighted with a single candle; and the small and capricious fire, near which the gambler was seated, threw its *upward* light, by starts and intervals, over the strong features and deep lines of his countenance. It would have been a study worthy of Rembrandt.

I drew my chair near him, and half shading my eyes with my hand, sat down in silence to mark the effect the letter would produce. Tyrrell (I imagine) was a man originally of hardy nerves, and had been thrown much into the various situations of life where the disguise of all outward emotion is easily and insensibly taught; but whether his frame had been shattered by his excesses, or that the insulting language of the note touched him to the quick, he seemed perfectly unable to govern his feelings; the lines were written hastily, and the light, as I said before, was faint and imperfect, and he was forced to pause over each word as he proceeded, so that "the iron" had full time to "enter into his soul."

Passion, however, developed itself differently in him than in Glanville: in the latter it was a rapid transition of powerful feelings, one angry wave dashing over another; it was the passion of a strong and keenly susceptible mind, to which every sting was a dagger, and which used the force of a giant to dash away the insect which attacked it. In Tyrrell it was passion acting on a callous mind but a broken frame; his hand trembled violently; his voice faltered; he could scarcely command the muscles which enabled him to speak: but there

was no fiery start, no indignant burst, no flashing forth of the soul; — in him it was the body overcoming and paralyzing the mind; in Glanville it was the mind governing and convulsing the body.

"Mr. Pelham," he said at last, after a few preliminary efforts to clear his voice, "this note requires some consideration. I know not at present whom to appoint as my second; will you call upon me early to-morrow?"

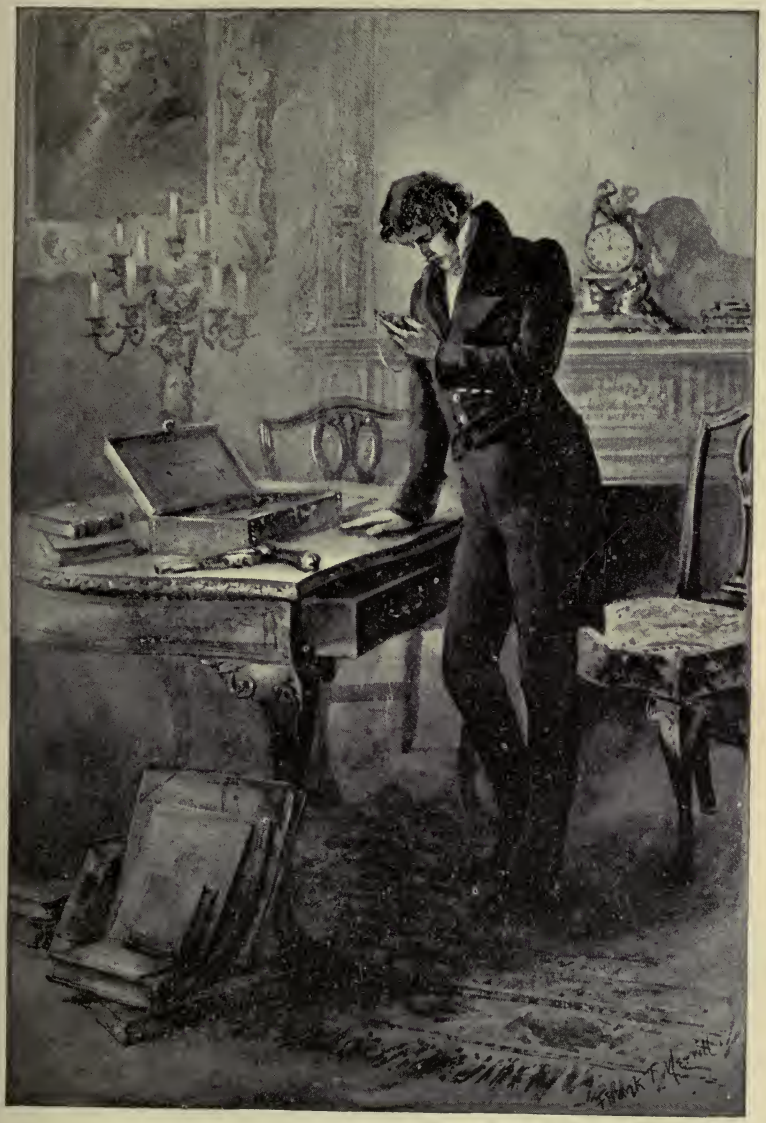
"I am sorry," said I, "that my sole instructions were to get an immediate answer from you. Surely either of the gentlemen I saw with you would officiate as your second?"

Tyrrell made no reply for some moments. He was endeavouring to compose himself, and in some measure he succeeded. He raised his head with a haughty air of defiance, and tearing the paper deliberately, though still with uncertain and trembling fingers, he stamped his foot upon the atoms.

"Tell your principal," said he, "that I retort upon him the foul and false words he has uttered against me; that I trample upon his assertions with the same scorn I feel towards himself; and that before this hour to-morrow I will confront him *to* death as through life. For the rest, Mr. Pelham, I cannot name my second till the morning; leave me your address, and you shall hear from me before you are stirring. Have you anything further with me?"

"Nothing," said I, laying my card on the table, "I have fulfilled the most ungrateful charge ever intrusted to me. I wish you good night."

I re-entered the carriage, and drove to Glanville's. I broke into the room rather abruptly; Glanville was leaning on the table, and gazing intently on a small miniature. A pistol-case lay beside him: one of the pistols in order for use, and the other still unarranged; the room was, as usual, covered with books and papers, and on the costly cushions of the ottoman lay the large black dog, which I remembered well as his companion of yore, and which he kept with him constantly, as the only thing he could at all times bear: the animal lay curled up, with its quick, black eye fixed watchfully upon its



"GLANVILLE WAS GAZING INTENTLY ON A SMALL MINIATURE."

master, and directly I entered, it uttered, though without moving, a low, warning growl.

Glanville looked up, and in some confusion thrust the picture into a drawer of the table, and asked me my news. I told him word for word what had passed. Glanville set his teeth, and clenched his hand firmly; and then, as if his anger was at once appeased, he suddenly changed the subject and tone of our conversation. He spoke with great cheerfulness and humour on the various topics of the day, touched upon politics, laughed at Lord Guloseton, and seemed as indifferent and unconscious of the event of the morrow as my peculiar constitution would have rendered myself.

When I rose to depart, for I had too great an interest in *him* to feel much for the subjects he conversed on, he said, "I shall write one line to my mother, and another to my poor sister; you will deliver them if I fall, for I have sworn that one of us shall not quit the ground alive. I shall be all impatience to know the hour you will arrange with Tyrrell's second. God bless you, and farewell for the present."

CHAPTER LX.

CHARGE, Chester, charge! — *Marmion.*

Though this was one of the first *mercantile* transactions of my life, I had no doubt about acquitting myself with reputation. — *Vicar of Wakefield.*

THE next morning I was at breakfast, when a packet was brought me from Tyrrell; it contained a sealed letter to Glanville, and a brief note to myself. The latter I transcribe: —

MY DEAR SIR, — The enclosed letter to Sir Reginald Glanville will explain my reasons for not keeping my pledge: suffice it to state to you that they are such as wholly to exonerate me and fairly to satisfy Sir Reginald. It will be useless to call upon me; I leave town before you

will receive this. Respect for myself obliges me to add that, although there are circumstances that forbid my meeting Sir Reginald Glanville, there are none to prevent my demanding satisfaction of any one, *whoever he may be*, who shall deem himself authorized to call my motives into question.

I have the honour, etc.,

JOHN TYRRELL.

It was not until I had thrice read this letter that I could credit its contents. From all I had seen of Tyrrell's character, I had no reason to suspect him to be less courageous than the generality of worldly men. And yet, when I considered the violent language of Glanville's letter and Tyrrell's apparent resolution the night before, I scarcely knew to what more honourable motive than the want of courage to attribute his conduct. However, I lost no time in despatching the whole packet to Glanville, with a few lines from myself, saying I should call in an hour.

When I fulfilled this promise, Glanville's servant told me his master had gone out immediately on reading the letters I had sent, and had merely left word that he should not return home the whole day. That night he was to have brought an important motion before the House. A message from him, pleading sudden and alarming illness, devolved this duty upon another member of his party. Lord Dawton was in despair; the motion was lost by a great majority; the papers, the whole of that week, were filled with the most triumphant abuse and ridicule of the Whigs. Never was that unhappy and persecuted party reduced to so low an ebb; never did there seem a fainter probability of their coming into power. They appeared almost annihilated,—a mere *nominis umbra*.

On the eighth day from Glanville's disappearance, a sudden event in the cabinet threw the whole country into confusion; the Tories trembled to the very soles of their easy slippers of sinecure and office; the eyes of the public were turned to the Whigs, and chance seemed to effect in an instant that change in their favour which all their toil, trouble, eloquence, and art had been unable for so many years to render even a remote probability.

But there was a strong though secret party in the State that, concealed under a general name, worked only for a private end, and made a progress in number and respectability not the less sure for being but little suspected. Foremost among the leaders of this party was Lord Vincent. Dawton, who regarded them with fear and jealousy, considered the struggle rather between them and himself, than any longer between himself and the Tories; and strove, while it was yet time, to reinforce himself by a body of allies, which, should the contest really take place, might be certain of giving him the superiority. The Marquis of Chester was among the most powerful of the neutral noblemen; it was of the greatest importance to gain him to the cause. He was a sturdy, sporting, independent man, who lived chiefly in the country, and turned his ambition rather towards promoting the excellence of quadrupeds than the bad passions of men. To this personage Lord Dawton implored me to be the bearer of a letter, and to aid, with all the dexterity in my power, the purpose it was intended to effect. It was the most consequential mission yet intrusted to me, and I felt eager to turn my diplomatic energies to so good an account. Accordingly, one bright morning I wrapped myself carefully in my cloak, placed my invaluable person safely in my carriage, and set off to Chester Park in the county of Suffolk.

CHAPTER LXI.

HINC canibus blandis rabies venit. — VIRGIL: *Georgics.*

I SHOULD have mentioned that the day after I sent to Glanville Tyrrell's communication I received a short and hurried note from the former, saying that he had left London in pursuit of Tyrrell, and that he would not rest till he had brought him to account. In the hurry of the public events in which I

had been of late so actively engaged, my mind had not had leisure to dwell much upon Glanville; but when I was alone in my carriage, that singular being, and the mystery which attended him, forced themselves upon my reflection, in spite of all the importance of my mission.

I was leaning back in my carriage, at (I think) Ware, while they were changing horses, when a voice, strongly associated with my meditations, struck upon my ear. I looked out, and saw Thornton standing in the yard, attired with all his original smartness of boot and breeches; he was employed in smoking a cigar, sipping brandy and water, and exercising his conversational talents in a mixture of slang and jockeyism, addressed to two or three men of his own rank of life and seemingly his companions. His brisk eye soon discovered me, and he swaggered to the carriage door with that ineffable assurance of manner which was so peculiarly his own.

"Ah, ah, Mr. Pelham," said he, "going to Newmarket, I suppose? Bound there myself; like to be found among my *betters*. Ha, ha,—excuse a pun: what odds on the favourite? What, you won't bet, Mr. Pelham?—close and sly at present? Well, *the silent sow sups up all the broth*—eh?"

"I 'm not going to Newmarket," I replied; "I never attend races."

"Indeed!" answered Thornton. "Well, if I was as rich as you, I would soon make or spend a fortune on the course. Seen Sir John Tyrrell? No? He is to be there. Nothing can cure him of gambling; what's bred in the bone, etc. Good day, Mr. Pelham; won't keep you any longer; sharp shower coming on. 'The devil will soon be basting his wife with a leg of mutton,' as the proverb says; servant, Mr. Pelham."

And at these words my post-boy started, and released me from my *bête noire*. I spare my reader an account of my miscellaneous reflections on Thornton, Dawton, Vincent, politics, Glanville, and *Ellen*, and will land him, without further delay, at Chester Park.

I was ushered, through a large oak hall of the reign of James the First, into a room strongly resembling the princi-

pal apartment of a club; two or three round tables were covered with newspapers, journals, racing calendars, etc. An enormous fireplace was crowded with men of all ages, I had almost said of all ranks; but however various they might appear in their mien and attire, they were wholly of the patrician order. One thing, however, in this room, belied its likeness to the apartment of a club; namely, a number of dogs, that lay in scattered groups upon the floor. Before the windows were several horses, in body-cloths, led to exercise upon a plain in the park, levelled as smooth as a bowling-green at Putney; and, stationed at an oriel window, in earnest attention to the scene without, were two men; the tallest of these was Lord Chester. There was a stiffness and inelegance in his address which prepossessed me strongly against him. "Les manières que l'on néglige comme de petites choses, sont souvent ce qui fait que les hommes décident de vous en bien ou en mal."[1]

I had long since, when I was at the University, been introduced to Lord Chester; but I had quite forgotten his person, and he the very circumstance. I said, in a low tone, that I was the bearer of a letter of some importance, from our mutual friend Lord Dawton, and that I should request the honour of a private interview at Lord Chester's first convenience.

His lordship bowed, with an odd mixture of the civility of a jockey and the *hauteur* of a head groom of the stud, and led the way to a small apartment, which I afterwards discovered he called his own. (I never could make out, by the way, why, in England, the very worst room in the house is always appropriated to the master of it, and dignified by the appellation of "the gentleman's own"). I gave the Newmarket grandee the letter intended for him, and quietly seating myself, awaited the result.

He read it through slowly and silently, and then, taking out a huge pocketbook, full of racing bets, horses' ages, jockey opinions, and such like memoranda, he placed it with much solemnity among this dignified company, and said, with

[1] "The manners which one neglects as trifles, are often precisely that by which men decide on you favourably or the reverse."

a cold, but would-be courteous air, "My friend Lord Dawton says you are entirely in his confidence, Mr. Pelham. I hope you will honour me with your company at Chester Park for two or three days, during which time I shall have leisure to reply to Lord Dawton's letter. Will you take some refreshment?"

I answered the first sentence in the affirmative, and the latter in the negative: and Lord Chester, thinking it perfectly unnecessary to trouble himself with any further questions or remarks which the whole jockey club might not hear, took me back into the room we had quitted, and left me to find or make whatever acquaintance I could. Pampered and spoiled as I was in the most difficult circles of London, I was beyond measure indignant at the cavalier demeanour of this rustic thane, who, despite his marquisate and his acres, was not less below me in the aristocracy of ancient birth than in that of cultivated intellect. I looked round the room, and did not recognize a being of my acquaintance: I seemed literally thrown into a new world; the very language in which the conversation was held, sounded strange to my ear. I had always transgressed my general rule of knowing all men in all grades, in the single respect of *sporting characters:* they were a species of bipeds that I would never recognize as belonging to the human race. Alas! I now found the bitter effects of not following my usual maxims. It is a dangerous thing to encourage too great a disdain of one's inferiors· pride must have a fall.

After I had been a whole quarter of an hour in this strange place, my better genius came to my aid. Since I found no society among the two-legged brutes, I turned to the quadrupeds. At one corner of the room lay a black terrier of the true English breed; at another was a short, sturdy, wiry one, of the Scotch. I soon formed a friendship with each of these *canine Pelei* (little bodies with great souls), and then by degrees alluring them from their retreat to the centre of the room, I fairly endeavoured to set them by the ears. Thanks to the national antipathy, I succeeded to my heart's content. The contest soon aroused the other individuals of the genus;

up they started from their repose, like Roderick Dhu's merry men, and incontinently flocked to the scene of battle. The example became contagious. In a very few moments the whole room was a scene of uproarious confusion: the beasts yelled, and bit, and struggled with the most delectable ferocity. To add to the effect, the various owners of the dogs crowded round,—some to stimulate, others to appease, the fury of the combatants. At length the conflict was assuaged. By dint of blows, and kicks, and remonstrances from their dignified proprietors the dogs slowly withdrew, one with the loss of half an ear, another with a mouth increased by one-half of its natural dimensions, and, in short, every one of the combatants with some token of the severity of the conflict. I did not wait for the thunderstorm I foresaw in the inquiry as to the origin of the war; I rose with a *nonchalant* yawn of *ennui*, marched out of the apartment, called a servant, demanded my own room, repaired to it, and immersed the internal faculties of my head in Mignet's "History of the Revolution," while Bedos busied himself in its outward embellishment.

CHAPTER LXII.

NOSTER ludos spectaverat una,
Luserat in campo, Fortunæ filius, omnes.—HORACE.

I DID not leave my room till the first dinner-bell had ceased a sufficient time to allow me the pleasing hope that I should have but a few moments to wait in the drawing-room, previously to the grand epoch and ceremony of a European day. The manner most natural to me is one rather open and easy; but I piqued myself peculiarly upon a certain (though occasional) air which keeps impertinence aloof. This day I assumed a double quantum of dignity in entering a room which I well knew would not be filled with my admirers: there

were a few women round Lady Chester; and, as I always feel reassured by a sight of the dear sex, I walked towards them.

Judge of my delight when I discovered amongst the group Lady Harriet Garrett. It is true that I had no particular predilection for that lady; but the sight of a negress I had seen before I should have hailed with rapture in so desolate and inhospitable a place. If my pleasure at seeing Lady Harriet was great, hers seemed equally so at receiving my salutation. She asked me if I knew Lady Chester; and on my negative reply, immediately introduced me to that personage. I now found myself quite at home; my spirits rose, and I exerted every nerve to be as charming as possible. In youth, to endeavour is to succeed.

I gave a most animated account of the canine battle, interspersed with various sarcasms on the owners of the combatants, which were by no means ill-received either by the marchioness or her companions; and, in fact, when the dinner was announced, they all rose in a mirth sufficiently unrestrained to be anything but patrician: for my part, I offered my arm to Lady Harriet, and paid her as many compliments on crossing the suite that led to the dining-room as would have turned a much wiser head than her ladyship's.

The dinner went off agreeably enough as long as the women stayed; but the moment they quitted the room, I experienced exactly the same feeling known unto a mother's darling left for the first time at that strange, cold, comfortless place — yclept a school.

I was not, however, in a mood to suffer my flowers of oratory to blush unseen. Besides, it was absolutely necessary that I should make a better impression upon my host. I leaned, therefore, across the table, and listened eagerly to the various conversations afloat: at last I perceived on the opposite side Sir Lionel Garrett, a personage whom I had not before even inquired after or thought of. He was busily and noisily employed in discussing the game-laws. "Thank Heaven," thought I, "I shall be on firm ground there." The general interest of the subject, and the loudness with which

it was debated, soon drew all the scattered conversation into one focus.

"What?" said Sir Lionel, in a high voice, to a modest, shrinking youth, probably from Cambridge, who had supported the liberal side of the question,—"what! are our interests to be *never* consulted? Are we to have our only amusement taken away from us? What do you imagine brings country gentlemen to their seats? Do you not know, sir, the vast importance our residence at our country houses is to the nation? Destroy the game-laws, and you destroy our very existence as a people!"

"Now," thought I, "it is my time."—"Sir Lionel," said I, speaking almost from one end of the table to the other, "I perfectly agree with your sentiments: I am entirely of opinion, first, that it is absolutely necessary for the safety of the nation that game should be preserved; secondly, that if you take away game, you take away country gentlemen; no two propositions can be clearer than these; but I do differ from you with respect to the intended alterations. Let us put wholly out of the question the interests of the poor people or of society at large: those are minor matters, not worthy of a moment's consideration; let us only see how far *our* interests as sportsmen will be affected. I think by a very few words I can clearly prove to you that the proposed alterations will make us much better off than we are at present."

I then entered shortly, yet fully enough, into the nature of the laws as they now stood, and as they were intended to be changed. I first spoke of the two great disadvantages of the present system to country gentlemen; namely, in the number of poachers and the expense of preserving. Observing that I was generally and attentively listened to, I dwelt upon these two points with much pathetic energy; and having paused till I had got Sir Lionel and one or two of his supporters to confess that it would be highly desirable that these defects should, *if possible*, be remedied, I proceeded to show how and in what manner it *was* possible. I argued that to effect this possibility was the exact object of the alterations suggested: I anticipated the objections; I answered them in

the form of propositions as clearly and concisely stated as possible; and as I spoke with great civility and conciliation, and put aside every appearance of care for any human being in the world who was not possessed of a qualification, I perceived at the conclusion of my harangue that I had made a very favourable impression. That evening completed my triumph; for Lady Chester and Lady Harriet made so good a story of my adventure with the dogs, that the matter passed off as a famous joke, and I was soon considered by the whole knot as a devilish amusing, good-natured, sensible fellow. So true is it that there is no situation which a little tact cannot turn to our own account: manage *yourself* well, and you may manage all the world.

As for Lord Chester, I soon won his heart by a few feats of horsemanship, and a few extempore inventions respecting the sagacity of dogs. Three days after my arrival we became inseparable; and I made such good use of my time that in two more he spoke to me of his friendship for Dawton and his wish for a dukedom. These motives it was easy enough to unite, and at last he promised me that his answer to my principal should be as acquiescent as I could desire; the morning after this promise commenced *the great day* at Newmarket.

Our whole party were of course bound to the race-ground, and with great reluctance I was pressed into the service. We were not many miles distant from the course, and Lord Chester mounted me on one of his horses. Our shortest way lay through rather an intricate series of cross-roads: and as I was very little interested in the conversation of my companions, I paid more attention to the scenery we passed than is my customary wont; for I study Nature rather in men than in fields, and find no landscape affords such variety to the eye, and such subject to the contemplation, as the inequalities of the human heart.

But there were to be fearful circumstances hereafter, to stamp forcibly upon my remembrance some traces of the scenery which now courted and arrested my view. The chief characteristics of the country were broad, dreary plains, di-

versified at times by dark plantations of fir and larch; the road was rough and stony, and here and there a melancholy rivulet, swelled by the first rains of spring, crossed our path, and lost itself in the rank weeds of some inhospitable marsh.

About six miles from Chester Park, to the left of the road, stood an old house with a new face; the brown, time-honoured bricks which composed the fabric were strongly contrasted by large Venetian windows newly inserted in frames of the most ostentatious white. A smart, green veranda, scarcely finished, ran along the low portico, and formed the termination to two thin rows of meagre and dwarfish sycamores, which did duty for an avenue, and were bounded on the roadside by a spruce white gate, and a sprucer lodge, so moderate in its dimensions that it would scarcely have boiled a turnip! — if a rat had got into it he might have run away with it! The ground was dug in various places, as if for the purpose of further *improvements*, and here and there a sickly little tree was carefully hurdled round, and seemed pining its puny heart out at the confinement.

In spite of all these well-judged and well-thriving graces of art, there was such a comfortless and desolate appearance about the place that it quite froze one to look at it; to be sure, a damp marsh on one side, and the skeleton rafters and beams of an old stable on the other, backed by a few dull and sulky-looking fir-trees, might in some measure create, or at least considerably add to, the indescribable cheerlessness of the *tout ensemble*. While I was curiously surveying the various parts of this northern Délices, and marvelling at the choice of two crows who were slowly walking over the unwholesome ground, instead of making all possible use of the black wings with which Providence had gifted them, I perceived two men on horseback wind round from the back part of the building, and proceed in a brisk trot down the avenue. We had not advanced many paces before they overtook us; the foremost of them turned round as he passed me, and pulling up his horse abruptly discovered to my dismayed view the features of Mr. Thornton. Nothing abashed by the slightness of my bow, or the grave stares of my lordly companions, who never forgot

the dignity of their birth, in spite of the vulgarity of their tastes, Thornton instantly and familiarly accosted me.

"Told you so, Mr. Pelham, *silent sow*, etc. — Sure I should have the pleasure of seeing you, though you kept it so snug. Well, will you bet *now?* No! — Ah, you 're a sly one. Staying here at that *nice-looking* house; belongs to Dawson, an old friend of mine; shall be happy to introduce you!"

"Sir," said I, abruptly, "you are too good. Permit me to request that you will rejoin your friend Mr. Dawson."

"Oh," said the imperturbable Thornton, "it does not signify; he won't be affronted at my lagging a little. However" (and here he caught my eye, which was assuming a sternness that perhaps little pleased him), "however, as it gets late and my mare is none of the best, I 'll wish you good morning." With these words Thornton put spurs to his horse and trotted off.

"Who the devil have you got there, Pelham?" said Lord Chester.

"A person," said I, "who picked me up at Paris, and insists on the right of 'treasure trove' to claim me in England. But will you let me ask, in my turn, whom that cheerful mansion we have just left belongs to?"

"To a Mr. Dawson, whose father was a gentleman farmer who bred horses, a very respectable person,—*for* I made one or two excellent bargains with him. The son was always on the turf, and contracted the worst of its habits. He bears but a very indifferent character, and will probably become a complete blackleg. He married, a short time since, a woman of some fortune, and I suppose it is her taste which has so altered and modernized his house. Come, gentlemen, we are on even ground, shall we trot?"

We proceeded but a few yards before we were again stopped by a precipitous ascent, and as Lord Chester was then earnestly engaged in praising his horse to one of the cavalcade, I had time to remark the spot. At the foot of the hill we were about slowly to ascend was a broad, unenclosed patch of waste land; a heron, flapping its enormous wings as it rose, directed my attention to a pool overgrown with rushes, and

half-sheltered on one side by a decayed tree, which, if one might judge from the breadth and hollowness of its trunk, had been a refuge to the wild bird, and a shelter to the wild cattle, at a time when such were the only intruders upon its hospitality, and when the country for miles and leagues round was honoured by as little of man's care and cultivation as was at present the rank waste which still nourished the gnarled and venerable roots of that single tree. There was something remarkably singular and grotesque in the shape and sinuosity of its naked and spectral branches; two of exceeding length stretched themselves forth in the very semblance of arms held out in the attitude of supplication; and the bend of the trunk over the desolate pond, the form of the hoary and blasted summit, and the hollow trunk half riven asunder in the shape of limbs, seemed to favour the gigantic deception. You might have imagined it an antediluvian transformation, or a daughter of the Titan race preserving in her metamorphosis her attitude of entreaty to the merciless Olympian.

This was the only tree visible; for a turn of the road, and the unevenness of the ground, completely veiled the house we had passed, and a few low firs and sycamores which made its only plantations. The sullen pool,—its ghostlike guardian,—the dreary heath around, the rude features of the country beyond, and the apparent absence of all human habitation, conspired to make a scene of the most dispiriting and striking desolation. I know not how to account for it: but, as I gazed around in silence, the whole place appeared to grow over my mind as one which I had seen, though dimly and drearily, as in a dream, before; and a nameless and unaccountable presentiment of fear and evil sank like ice into my heart. We ascended the hill; and, the rest of the road being of a kind better adapted to expedition, we mended our pace, and soon arrived at the goal of our journey.

The race-ground had its customary complement of knaves and fools,—the dupers and the duped. Poor Lady Chester, who had proceeded to the ground by the high-road (for the way we had chosen was inaccessible to those who ride in chariots, and whose charioteers are set up in high places),

was driving to and fro, the very picture of cold and discomfort; and the few solitary carriages which honoured the course looked as miserable as if they were witnessing the funeral of their owners' persons rather than the peril of their characters and purses.

As we rode along to the betting-post Sir John Tyrrell passed us; Lord Chester accosted him familiarly, and the baronet joined us. He had been an old votary of the turf in his younger days, and he still preserved all his ancient predilection in its favor.

It seemed that Chester had not met him for many years, and after a short and characteristic conversation of "God bless me, how long since I saw you! — good horse you're on; — you look thin; — admirable condition; — what have you been doing? — grand action; — ain't we behindhand? — famous fore-hand; — recollect old Queensberry? — hot in the mouth; — gone to the devil; — what are the odds?" — Lord Chester asked Tyrrell to go home with us. The invitation was readily accepted.

> "With impotence of will
> We wheel, though ghastly shadows interpose
> Round us, and round each other."[1]

Now, then, arose the noise, the clatter, the swearing, the lying, the perjury, the cheating, the crowd, the bustle, the hurry, the rush, the heat, the ardour, the impatience, the hope, the terror, the rapture, the agony of the RACE. The instant the first heat was over, one asked me one thing, one bellowed another: I fled to Lord Chester; he did not heed me. I took refuge with the marchioness; she was as sullen as an east wind could make her. Lady Harriet would talk of nothing but the horses: Sir Lionel would not talk at all. I was in the lowest pit of despondency, and the devils that kept me there were as blue as Lady Chester's nose. Silent, sad, sorrowful, and sulky, I rode away from the crowd, and moralized on its vicious propensities. One grows marvellously honest when the species of cheating before us is not suited to one's

[1] Shelley.

self. Fortunately, my better angel reminded me that about the distance of three miles from the course lived an old college friend, blessed, since we had met, with a parsonage and a wife. I knew his tastes too well to imagine that any allurement of an equestrian nature could have seduced him from the ease of his library and the dignity of his books; and hoping, therefore, that I should find him at home, I turned my horse's head in an opposite direction, and, rejoiced at the idea of my escape, bade adieu to the course.

As I cantered across the far end of the heath, my horse started from an object upon the ground; it was a man wrapped from head to foot in a long horseman's cloak, and so well guarded as to the face, from the raw inclemency of the day, that I could not catch even a glimpse of the features, through the hat and neck-shawl which concealed them. The head was turned, with apparent anxiety, towards the distant throng; and imagining the man belonging to the lower orders, with whom I am always familiar, I addressed to him, *en passant*, some trifling remark on the event of the race. He made no answer. There was something about him which induced me to look back several moments after I had left him behind. He had not moved an inch. There is such a certain uncomfortableness always occasioned to the mind by stillness and mystery united, that even the disguising garb and motionless silence of the man, innocent as I thought they must have been, impressed themselves disagreeably on my meditation as I rode briskly on.

It is my maxim never to be unpleasantly employed, even in thought, if I can help it; accordingly I changed the course of my reflection, and amused myself with wondering how matrimony and clerical dignity sat on the indolent shoulders of my old acquaintance.

CHAPTER LXIII.

> And as for me, tho' that I can but lite
> On bookès for me to read, I me delight
> And to hem give I faith and full crèdence,
> And in my heart have hem in reverence,
> So heartily that there is gamè none,
> That fro' my bookès maketh me to gone. — Chaucer.

Christopher Clutterbuck was a common individual of a common order, but little known in this busy and toiling world. I cannot flatter myself that I am about to present to your notice that *rara avis*, a new character; yet there is something interesting, and even unhackneyed, in the retired and simple class to which he belongs: and before I proceed to a darker period in my memoirs, I feel a calm and tranquillizing pleasure in the rest which a brief and imperfect delineation of my college companion affords me. My friend came up to the University with the learning which one about to quit the world might, with credit, have boasted of possessing, and the simplicity which one about to enter it would have been ashamed to confess. Quiet and shy in his habits and in his manners, he was never seen out of the precincts of his apartment, except in obedience to the stated calls of dinner, lectures, and chapel. Then his small and stooping form might be marked, crossing the quadrangle with a hurried step, and cautiously avoiding the smallest blade of the barren grass-plots, which are forbidden ground to the feet of all the lower orders of the collegiate oligarchy. Many were the smiles and jeers from the worse natured and better appointed students, who loitered idly along the court, at the rude garb and saturnine appearance of the humble undergraduate; and the calm countenance of the grave but amiable man who then bore the honour and *onus* of mathematical lecturer at our college would soften into a glance of mingled approbation and pity as he

noted the eagerness which spoke from the wan cheek and emaciated frame of the ablest of his pupils, hurrying — after each legitimate interruption — to the enjoyment of the crabbed characters and worm-worn volumes which contained for him all the seductions of pleasure and all the temptations of youth.

It is a melancholy thing, which none but those educated at a college can understand, to see the debilitated frames of the aspirants for academical honours; to mark the prime, the verdure, the glory, the life, of life wasted irrevocably away in a *labor ineptiarum*, which brings no harvest either to others or themselves. For the poet, the philosopher, the man of science we can appreciate the recompense if we commiserate the sacrifice; from the darkness of their retreat there goes a light, from the silence of their studies there issues a voice, to illumine or convince. We can imagine them looking from their privations to the far visions of the future, and hugging to their hearts, in the strength of no unnatural vanity, the reward which their labours are certain hereafter to obtain. To those who can anticipate the vast dominions of immortality among men, what boots the sterility of the cabined and petty *present?* But the mere man of languages and learning, the machine of a memory heavily but unprofitably employed, the Columbus wasting at the galley oar the energies which should have discovered a world, — for him there is no day-dream of the future, no grasp at the immortality of fame. Beyond the walls of his narrow room he knows no object; beyond the elucidation of a dead tongue he indulges no ambition; his life is one long school-day of lexicons and grammars, — a Fabric of Ice, cautiously excluded from a single sunbeam, — elaborately useless, ingeniously unprofitable; and leaving, at the moment it melts away, not a single trace of the space it occupied or the labour it cost.

At the time I went to the University, my poor collegian had attained all the honours his employment could ever procure him. He *had been* a Pitt scholar; *he was* a senior wrangler and a Fellow of his college. It often happened that I found myself next to him at dinner; and I was struck by his abstinence, and pleased with his modesty, despite the *gaucherie* of

his manner and the fashion of his garb. By degrees I insinuated myself into his acquaintance; and as I had always some love of scholastic lore, I took frequent opportunities of conversing with him upon Horace and consulting him upon Lucian.

Many a dim twilight have we sat together, reviving each other's recollection, and occasionally relaxing into the grave amusement of *capping verses.* Then, if by any chance my ingenuity or memory enabled me to puzzle my companion, his good temper would lose itself in a quaint pettishness, or he would hurl against me some line of Aristophanes, and ask me, with a raised voice and arched brow, to give him a fitting answer to *that.* But if, as was much more frequently the case, he fairly ran me down into a pause and confession of inability, he would rub his hands with a strange chuckle, and offer me, in the bounteousness of his heart, to read aloud a Greek Ode of his own, while he treated me "to a dish of tea." There was much in the good man's innocence and guilelessness of soul which made me love him, and I did not rest till I had procured him, before I left the University, the living which he now held. Since then he had married the daughter of a neighbouring clergyman, an event of which he had duly informed me; but, though this great step in the life of "a reading man" had not taken place many months since, I had completely, after a hearty wish for his domestic happiness, consigned it to a dormant place in my recollection.

The house which I now began to approach was small but comfortable; perhaps there was something melancholy in the old-fashioned hedges, cut and trimmed with mathematical precision, which surrounded the glebe, as well as in the heavy architecture and dingy bricks of the reverend recluse's habitation. To make amends for this, there was also something peculiarly still and placid about the appearance of the house, which must have suited well the tastes and habits of the owner. A small formal lawn was adorned with a square fish-pond, bricked round, and covered with the green weepings of four willows, which drooped over it from their station at each corner. At the opposite side of this Pierian reservoir

was a hermitage, or arbour of laurels, shaped in the stiff rusticity of the Dutch school, in the prevalence of which it was probably planted; behind this arbour, the ground, after a slight railing, terminated in an orchard.

The sound I elicited from the gate bell seemed to ring through that retired place with singular shrillness; and I observed at the opposite window all that bustle of drawing curtains, peeping faces, and hasty retreats, which denote female anxiety and perplexity at the unexpected approach of a stranger.

After some time the parson's single servant, a middle-aged slovenly man, in a loose frock and gray kerseymere nondescripts, opened the gate and informed me that his master *was* at home. With a few earnest admonitions to my admitter — who was, like the domestics of many richer men, both groom and valet — respecting the safety of my borrowed horse, I entered the house; the servant did not think it necessary to inquire my name, but threw open the door of the study, with the brief introduction of — "A gentleman, sir."

Clutterbuck was standing, with his back towards me, upon a pair of library steps, turning over some dusky volumes: and below stood a pale, cadaverous youth, with a set and serious countenance, that bore no small likeness to Clutterbuck himself.

"*Mon Dieu,*" thought I, "he cannot have made such good use of his matrimonial state as to have raised this lanky impression of himself in the space of seven months!" The good man turned round, and almost fell off the steps with the nervous shock of beholding me so near him; he descended with precipitation, and shook me so warmly and tightly by the hand, that he brought tears into my eyes as well as his own.

"Gently, my good friend," said I; "*parce, precor,* or you will force me to say, '*ibimus una ambo, flentes* valido connexi fœdere.'"

Clutterbuck's eyes watered still more when he heard the grateful sounds of what to him was the mother tongue. He surveyed me from head to foot with an air of benign and

fatherly complacency, and dragging forth from its sullen rest a large arm-chair, on whose cushions of rusty horse-hair sat an eternal cloud of classic dust, too sacred to be disturbed, he *plumped* me down upon it before I was aware of the cruel hospitality.

"Oh! my nether garments," thought I. "*Quantus sudor inerit Bedoso* to restore you to your pristine purity!"

"But whence come you?" said my host, who cherished rather a formal and antiquated method of speech.

"From the Pythian games," said I; "the campus hight Newmarket. Do I see right, or is not yon *insignis juvenis* marvellously like you? Of a surety he rivals the Titans, if he is only a seven months' child!"

"Now, truly, my worthy friend," answered Clutterbuck, "you indulge in jesting! The boy is my nephew, a goodly child and a painstaking. I hope he will thrive at our gentle mother. He goes to Trinity next October. Benjamin Jeremiah, my lad, this is my worthy friend and benefactor, of whom I have often spoken; go, and order him of our best; he will partake of our repast!"

"No, really," I began; but Clutterbuck gently placed the hand, whose strength of affection I had already so forcibly experienced, upon my mouth. "Pardon me, my friend," said he. "No *stranger* should depart till he had broken bread with us; how much more then a friend! Go, Benjamin Jeremiah, and tell your aunt that Mr. Pelham will dine with us; and order, furthermore, that the barrel of oysters sent unto us as a present by my worthy friend, Dr. Swallow'em, be dressed in the fashion that seemeth best; they are a classic dainty, and we shall think of our great masters the ancients whilst we devour them. And — stop, Benjamin Jeremiah, see that we have the wine with the black seal; and — now — go, Benjamin Jeremiah!"

"Well, my old friend," said I, when the door closed upon the sallow and smileless nephew, "how do you love the connubial yoke? Do you give the same advice as Socrates? I hope, at least, it is not from the same experience."

"Hem!" answered the grave Christopher, in a tone that

struck me as somewhat nervous and uneasy, "you are become quite a humourist since we parted. I suppose you have been warming your wit by the lambent fires of Horace and Aristophanes!"

"No," said I, "the living allow those whose toilsome lot it is to mix constantly with them but little time to study the monuments of the dead. But, in sober earnest, are you as happy as I wish you?"

Clutterbuck looked down for a moment, and then, turning towards the table, laid one hand upon a manuscript, and pointed with the other to his books. "With this society," said he, "how can I be otherwise?"

I gave him no reply, but put my hand upon his manuscript. He made a modest and coy effort to detain it, but I knew that writers were like women, and, making use of no displeasing force, I possessed myself of the paper.

It was a treatise on the Greek participle. My heart sickened within me; but, as I caught the eager glance of the poor author, I brightened up my countenance into an expression of pleasure, and appeared to read and comment upon the *difficiles nugæ* with an interest commensurate to his own. Meanwhile the youth returned. He had much of that delicacy of sentiment which always accompanies mental cultivation, of whatever sort it may be. He went, with a scarlet blush over his thin face, to his uncle, and whispered something in his ear which, from the angry embarrassment it appeared to occasion, I was at no loss to divine.

"Come," said I, "we are too long acquainted for ceremony. Your *placens uxor*, like all ladies in the same predicament, thinks your invitation a little unadvised; and, in real earnest, I have so long a ride to perform that I would rather eat your oysters another day!"

"No, no," said Clutterbuck, with greater eagerness than his even temperament was often hurried into betraying,—"no, I will go and reason with her myself. 'Wives, obey your husbands,' saith the preacher!" And the quondam senior wrangler almost upset his chair in the perturbation with which he arose from it.

I laid my hand upon him. "Let me go myself," said I, "since you *will* have me dine with you. 'The sex is ever to a *stranger* kind,' and I shall probably be more persuasive than you, in despite of your legitimate authority."

So saying, I left the room, with a curiosity more painful than pleasing, to see the collegian's wife. I arrested the man-servant, and ordered him to usher and announce me.

I was led *instanter* into the apartment where I had discovered all the signs of female inquisitiveness which I have before detailed. There I discovered a small woman, in a robe equally slatternly and fine, with a sharp pointed nose, small, cold, gray eyes, and a complexion high towards the cheek-bones, but waxing of a light green before it reached the wide and querulous mouth, which, well I ween, seldom opened to smile upon the unfortunate possessor of her charms. She, like the Reverend Christopher, was not without her companions; a tall meagre woman, of advanced age, and a girl, some years younger than herself, were introduced to me as her mother and sister.

My *entrée* occasioned no little confusion, but I knew well how to remedy that. I held out my hand so cordially to the wife, that I enticed, though with evident reluctance, two bony fingers into my own, which I did not dismiss without a most mollifying and affectionate squeeze; and drawing my chair close towards her, began conversing as familiarly as if I had known the whole triad for years. I declared my joy at seeing my old friend so happily settled; commented on the improvement of his looks; ventured a sly joke at the good effects of matrimony; praised a cat couchant, worked in worsted by the venerable hand of the eldest matron; offered to procure her a *real* cat of the true Persian breed, black ears four inches long, with a tail like a squirrel's; and then slid, all at once, into the unauthorized invitation of the good man of the house.

"Clutterbuck," said I, "has asked me very warmly to stay to dinner; but, before I accepted his offer, I insisted upon coming to see how far it was confirmed by you. Gentlemen, you are aware, my dear madam, know nothing of these matters,

and I never accept a married man's invitation till it has the sanction of his lady; I have an example of that at home. My mother (Lady Frances) is the best-tempered woman in the world; but my father could no more take the liberty (for I may truly call it such) to ask even his oldest friend to dinner without consulting the mistress of the house, than he could think of flying. No one (says my mother, and she says what is very true) can tell about the household affairs but those who have the management of them; and in pursuance of this aphorism, I dare not accept any invitation in this house, except from its mistress."

"Really," said Mrs. Clutterbuck, colouring with mingled embarrassment and gratification, "you are very considerate and polite, Mr. Pelham: I only wish Mr. Clutterbuck paid half your attention to these things; nobody can tell the trouble and inconvenience he puts me to. If I *had* known a little time before that you were coming — but now I fear we have nothing in the house; but if you can partake of our fare, such as it is, Mr. Pelham —"

"Your kindness enchants me," I exclaimed, "and I no longer scruple to confess the pleasure I have in accepting my old friend's offer."

This affair being settled, I continued to converse for some minutes with as much vivacity as I could summon to my aid; and when I went once more to the library, it was with the comfortable impression of having left those as friends whom I had visited as foes.

The dinner hour was four, and till it came Clutterbuck and I amused ourselves "in commune wise and sage." There was something high in the sentiments and generous in the feelings of this man, which made me the more regret the bias of mind which rendered them so unavailing. At college he had never ("illis dissimilis in nostro tempore natis!") cringed to the possessors of clerical power. In the duties of his station as dean of the college, he was equally strict to the black cap and the lordly hat. Nay, when one of his private pupils, whose father was possessed of more church preferment than any nobleman in the peerage, disobeyed his repeated summons and

constantly neglected to attend his instructions, he sent for him, resigned his tuition, and refused any longer to accept a salary which the negligence of his pupil would not allow him to requite. In his clerical tenets he was high: in his judgment of others, he was mild. His knowledge of the liberty of Greece was not drawn from the ignorant historian of her Republics;[1] nor did he find in the contemplative mildness and gentle philosophy of the ancients nothing but a sanction for modern bigotry and existing abuses.

It was a remarkable trait in his conversation that, though he indulged in many references to the old authors and allusions to classic customs, he never deviated into the innumerable quotations with which his memory was stored. No words, in spite of all the quaintness and antiquity of his dialect, purely Latin or Greek ever escaped his lips, except in our engagements at capping verses, or when he was allured into accepting a challenge of learning from some of its pretenders; then, indeed, he could pour forth such a torrent of authorities as effectually silenced his opponent; but these contests were rarely entered into, and these triumphs moderately indulged. Yet he loved the use of quotations in others, and I knew the greatest pleasure I could give him was in the frequent use of them. Perhaps he thought it would seem like an empty parade of learning in one who so confessedly possessed it, to deal in the strange words of another tongue, and consequently rejected them, while, with an innocent inconsistency, characteristic of the man, it never occurred to him that there was anything, either in the quaintness of his dialect or the occupations of his leisure, which might subject him to the same imputation of pedantry.

And yet, at times, when he warmed in his subject, there was a tone in his language as well as sentiment which might not be improperly termed eloquent; and the real modesty and quiet enthusiasm of his nature took away from the impression

[1] It is really a disgrace to our University that any of its colleges should accept as a reference, or even tolerate as an author, the presumptuous bigot who has bequeathed to us, in his "History of Greece," the masterpiece of a declaimer without energy and of a pedant without learning.

he made the feeling of pomposity and affectation with which otherwise he might have inspired you.

"You have a calm and quiet habitation here," said I; "the very rooks seem to have something lulling in that venerable caw which it always does me such good to hear."

"Yes," answered Clutterbuck, "I own that there is much that is grateful to the temper of my mind in this retired spot. I fancy that I can the better give myself up to the contemplation which makes, as it were, my intellectual element and food. And yet I dare say that in this (as in all other things) I do strangely err; for I remember that during my only sojourn in London I was wont to feel the sound of wheels and of the throng of steps shake the windows of my lodging in the Strand, as if it were but a warning to recall my mind more closely to its studies: of a verity that noisy evidence of man's labour reminded me how little the great interests of this rolling world were to me, and the feeling of solitude amongst the crowds without made me cling more fondly to the company I found within. For it seems that the mind is ever addicted to contraries, and that when it be transplanted into a soil where all its neighbours do produce a certain fruit, it doth, from a strange perversity, bring forth one of a different sort. You would little believe, my honoured friend, that in this lonely seclusion, I cannot at all times prohibit my thoughts from wandering to that gay world of London, which, during my tarry therein, occupied them in so partial a degree. You smile, my friend, nevertheless it is true; and when you reflect that I dwelt in the western department of the metropolis, near unto the noble mansion of Somerset House, and consequently in the very centre of what the idle call Fashion, you will not be so surprised at the occasional migration of my thoughts."

Here the worthy Clutterbuck paused and sighed slightly. "Do you farm, or cultivate your garden?" said I; "they are no ignoble nor unclassical employments."

"Unhappily," answered Clutterbuck, "I am inclined to neither; my chest pains me with a sharp and piercing pang when I attempt to stoop, and my respiration is short and asth-

matic; and, in truth, I seldom love to stir from my books and papers. I go with Pliny to his garden and with Virgil to his farm; those mental excursions are the sole ones I indulge in; and when I think of my appetite for application, and my love of idleness, I am tempted to wax proud of the propensities which reverse the censure of Tacitus on our German ancestors, and incline so fondly to quiet, while they turn so restlessly from sloth."

Here the speaker was interrupted by a long, low, dry cough, which penetrated me to the heart. "Alas!" thought I, as I heard it, and looked upon my poor friend's hectic and hollow cheek, "it is not only his mind that will be the victim to the fatality of his studies."

It was some moments before I renewed the conversation, and I had scarcely done so before I was interrupted by the entrance of Benjamin Jeremiah with a message from his aunt that dinner would be ready in a few minutes. Another long whisper to Christopher succeeded. The *ci-devant* fellow of Trinity looked down at his garments with a perplexed air. I saw at once that he had received a hint on the propriety of a change of raiment. To give him due leisure for this, I asked the youth to show me a room in which I might perform the usual ablutions previous to dinner, and followed him upstairs to a comfortless sort of dressing-room, without a fireplace, where I found a yellow-ware jug and basin, and a towel of so coarse a huckaback that I did not dare adventure its rough texture next my complexion; my skin is not made for such rude fellowship. While I was tenderly and daintily anointing my hands with some hard water, of no Blandusian spring, and that vile composition entitled Windsor soap, I heard the difficult breathing of poor Clutterbuck on the stairs, and soon after he entered the adjacent room. Two minutes more and his servant joined him, for I heard the rough voice of the domestic say, "There is no more of the wine with the black seal left, sir!"

"No more, good Dixon? you mistake grievously. I had two dozen not a week since."

"Don't know, I 'm sure, sir!" answered Dixon with a care-

less and half-impertinent accent; "but there are great things, *like alligators,* in the cellar, which break all the bottles!"

"Alligators in my cellar!" said the astonished Clutterbuck.

"Yes, sir,—at least a venomous sort of reptile like them, which the people about here call *efts!*"

"What!" said Clutterbuck, innocently, and evidently not seeing the irony of his own question; "what! have the efts broken two dozen bottles in a week? Of an exceeding surety, it is strange that a little creature of the lizard species should be so destructive; perchance they have an antipathy to the vinous smell: I will confer with my learned friend, Dr. Dissectall, touching their strength and habits. Bring up some of the port, then, good Dixon."

"Yes, sir. All the corn is out; I had none for the gentleman's horse."

"Why, Dixon, my memory fails me strangely, or I paid you the sum of four pounds odd shillings for corn on Friday last."

"Yes, sir: but your cow and the chickens eat so much; and then blind Dobbin has four feeds a day, and Farmer Johnson always puts his horse in our stable, and Mrs. Clutterbuck and the ladies fed the jackass the other day in the hired donkey-chaise; besides, the rats and mice are always at it."

"It is a marvel unto me," answered Clutterbuck, "how detrimental the vermin race are; they seem to have noted my poor possessions as their especial prey; remind me that I write to Dr. Dissectall to-morrow, good Dixon."

"Yes, sir; and now I think of it—" But here Mr. Dixon was cut short in his items by the entrance of a third person, who proved to be Mrs. Clutterbuck.

"What, not dressed yet, Mr. Clutterbuck? What a dawdler you are!—and do look—was ever woman so used? You have wiped your razor upon my nightcap—you dirty, slovenly—"

"I crave you many pardons; I own my error!" said Clutterbuck, in a nervous tone of interruption.

"Error, indeed!" cried Mrs. Clutterbuck, in a sharp, overstretched, querulous falsetto, suited to the occasion: "but this

is always the case; I am sure my poor temper is tried to the utmost; and Lord help thee, idiot! you have thrust those spindle legs of yours into your coat-sleeves instead of your breeches!"

"Of a truth, good wife, your eyes are more discerning than mine; and my legs, which are, as you say, somewhat thin, have indued themselves into what appertaineth not unto them; but for all that, Dorothea, I am not deserving of the epithet of idiot, with which you have been pleased to favour me; although my humble faculties are, indeed, of no eminent or surpassing order—"

"Pooh! pooh! Mr. Clutterbuck, I am sure I don't know what else you are, muddling your head all day with those good-for-nothing books. And now do tell me, how you could think of asking Mr. Pelham to dinner, when you knew we had nothing in the world but hashed mutton and an apple-pudding? Is that the way, sir, you disgrace your wife, after her condescension in marrying you?"

"Really," answered the patient Clutterbuck, "I was forgetful of those matters: but my friend cares as little as myself about the grosser tastes of the table; and the feast of intellectual converse is all that he desires in his brief sojourn beneath our roof."

"Feast of fiddlesticks, Mr. Clutterbuck! Did ever man talk such nonsense?"

"Besides," rejoined the *master* of the house, unheeding this interruption, "we have a luxury even of the palate, than which there are none more delicate, and unto which he, as well as myself, is, I know, somewhat unphilosophically given; I speak of the oysters, sent here by our good friend, Dr. Swallow'em."

"What do you mean, Mr. Clutterbuck? My poor mother and I had those oysters last night for our supper. I am sure she and my sister are almost starved; but you are always wanting to be pampered up above us all."

"Nay, nay," answered Clutterbuck, "you know you accuse me wrongfully, Dorothea; but now I think of it, would it not be better to modulate the tone of our conversation, seeing

that our guest (a circumstance which until now quite escaped my recollection) was shown into the next room for the purpose of washing his hands, the which, from their notable cleanliness, seemed to me wholly unnecessary? I would not have him overhear you, Dorothea, lest his kind heart should imagine me less happy than — than — it wishes me!"

"Good God, Mr. Clutterbuck!" were the only words I heard further: and with tears in my eyes, and a suffocating feeling in my throat, for the matrimonial situation of my unfortunate friend, I descended into the drawing-room. The only one yet there was the pale nephew: he was bending painfully over a book; I took it from him; it was "Bentley upon Phalaris." I could scarcely refrain from throwing it into the fire; "Another victim!" thought I. "Oh, the curse of an English education!"

By and by, down came the mother and the sister, then Clutterbuck, and lastly, bedizened out with gewgaws and trumpery, — the wife. Born and nurtured as I was in the art of the *volto sciolto, pensieri stretti,*[1] I had seldom found a more arduous task of dissimulation than that which I experienced now. However, the hope to benefit my friend's situation assisted me; the best way, I thought, of obtaining him more respect from his wife will be by showing her the respect he meets with from others. Accordingly, I sat down by her, and having first conciliated her attention by some of that coin termed compliments, in which there is no counterfeit that does not have the universal effect of real, I spoke with the most profound veneration of the talents and learning of Clutterbuck. I dilated upon the high reputation he enjoyed; upon the general esteem in which he was held; upon the kindness of his heart, the sincerity of his modesty, the integrity of his honour, — in short, whatever I thought likely to affect her. Most of all, I insisted upon the high panegyrics bestowed upon him by Lord this and the Earl that, and wound up with adding that I was certain he would die a bishop. My eloquence had its effect; all dinner time Mrs. Clutterbuck treated her husband with even striking consideration: my

[1] "The open countenance and closed thoughts."

words seemed to have gifted her with a new light, and to have wrought a thorough transformation in her view of her lord and master's character. Who knows not the truth that we have dim and short-sighted eyes to estimate the nature of our own kin, and that we borrow the spectacles which alone enable us to discern their merits or their failings from the opinion of strangers! It may be readily supposed that the dinner did not pass without its share of the ludicrous,—that the waiter and the dishes, the family and the host, would have afforded ample materials no less for the student of nature in Hogarth, than of caricature in Bunbury; but I was too seriously occupied in pursuing my object, and marking its success, to have time even for a smile. Ah! if ever you would allure your son to diplomacy, show him how subservient he may make it to benevolence.

When the women had retired, we drew our chairs near to each other; and, laying down my watch on the table, as I looked out upon the declining day, I said, "Let us make the best of our time; I can only linger here one half-hour longer."

"And how, my friend," said Clutterbuck, "shall we learn the method of making the best use of time? *There*, whether it be in the larger segments, or the petty subdivisions of our life, rests the great enigma of our being. Who is there that has ever exclaimed (pardon my pedantry, I am for once *driven* into Greek) *Eureka!* to this most difficult of the sciences?"

"Come," said I, "it is not for you, the favoured scholar, the honoured academician, whose hours are never idly employed, to ask this question!"

"Your friendship makes too flattering the acumen of your judgment," answered the modest Clutterbuck. "It has indeed been my lot to cultivate the fields of truth, as transmitted unto our hands by the wise men of old; and I have much to be thankful for, that I have in the employ been neither curtailed in my leisure nor abased in my independence,—the two great goods of a calm and meditative mind; yet are there moments in which I am led to doubt of the wisdom of my pursuits; and when, with a feverish and shaking hand, I put aside the books which have detained me from my rest till the

morning hour, and repair unto a couch often baffled of slumber by the pains and discomforts of this worn and feeble frame, I almost wish I could purchase the rude health of the peasant by the exchange of an idle and imperfect learning for the ignorance content with the narrow world it possesses because unconscious of the limitless creation beyond. Yet, my dear and esteemed friend, there is a dignified and tranquillizing philosophy in the writings of the ancients which ought to teach me a better condition of mind; and when I have risen from the lofty, albeit somewhat melancholy strain which swells through the essays of the graceful and tender Cicero, I have indeed felt a momentary satisfaction at my studies, and an elation even at the petty success with which I have cherished them. But these are brief and fleeting moments, and deserve chastisement for their pride. There is one thing, my Pelham, which has grieved me bitterly of late, and that is, that in the earnest attention which it is the — perhaps fastidious — custom of our University to pay to the minutiæ of classic lore, I do now oftentimes lose the spirit and beauty of the general bearing; nay, I derive a far greater pleasure from the ingenious amendment of a perverted text than from all the turn and thought of the sense itself; while I am straightening a crooked nail in the wine-cask, I suffer the wine to evaporate; but to this I am somewhat reconciled, when I reflect that it was also the misfortune of the great Porson and the elaborate Parr, men with whom I blush to find myself included in the same sentence."

"My friend," said I, "I wish neither to wound your modesty nor to impugn your pursuits; but think you not that it would be better, both for men and for yourself, if, while you are yet in the vigour of your age and reason, you occupy your ingenuity and application in some more useful and lofty work than that which you suffered me to glance at in your library; and, moreover, as the great object of him who would perfect his mind is first to strengthen the faculties of his body, would it not be prudent in you to lessen for a time your devotion to books; to exercise yourself in the fresh air, — to relax the bow by loosing the string; to mix more with the living, and

impart to men in conversation, as well as in writing, whatever the incessant labour of many years may have hoarded? Come, if not to town, at least to its vicinity; the profits of your living, if even tolerably managed, will enable you to do so without inconvenience. Leave your books to their shelves, and your flock to their curate, and — you shake your head — do I displease you?"

"No, no, my kind and generous adviser; but as the twig was set the tree must grow. I have not been without that ambition which, however vain and sinful, is the first passion to enter the wayward and tossing vessel of our soul, and the last to leave its stranded and shattered wreck: but mine found and attained its object at an age when in others it is, as yet, a vague and unsettled feeling; and it feeds now rather upon the recollections of what has been than ventures forward on a sea of untried and strange expectation. As for my studies, how can you, who have, and in no moderate draught, drunk of the old stream of Castaly, — how can *you* ask me *now* to change them? Are not the ancients my food, my aliment, my solace in sorrow, — my sympathizers, my very benefactors, in joy? Take them away from me, and you take away the very winds which purify and give motion to the obscure and silent current of my life. Besides, my Pelham, it cannot have escaped your observation that there is little in my present state which promises a long increase of days: the few that remain to me must glide away like their predecessors; and whatever be the infirmities of my body, and the little harassments which, I am led to suspect, do occasionally molest the most fortunate who link themselves unto the unstable and fluctuating part of creation, which we term women, more especially in an hymeneal capacity, — whatever these may be, I have my refuge and my comforter in the golden-souled and dreaming Plato and the sententious wisdom of the less imaginative Seneca. Nor, when I am reminded of my approaching dissolution by the symptoms which do mostly at the midnight hour press themselves upon me, is there a small and inglorious pleasure in the hope that I may meet, hereafter, in those Islands of the Blessed, which they dimly

dreamt of, but which are opened unto *my* vision, without a cloud, or mist, or shadow of uncertainty and doubt, with those bright spirits which we do now converse with so imperfectly; that I may catch from the very lips of Homer the unclouded gorgeousness of fiction, and from the accents of Archimedes the unadulterated calculations of truth!"

Clutterbuck ceased; and the glow of his enthusiasm diffused itself over his sunken eye and consumptive cheek. The boy, who had sat apart, and silent, during our discourse, laid his head upon the table, and sobbed audibly; and I rose, deeply affected, to offer to one for whom they were, indeed, unavailing, the wishes and blessings of an eager but not hardened disciple of the world. We parted: on this earth we can never meet again. The light has wasted itself beneath the bushel. It will be six weeks to-morrow since the meek and noble-minded academician breathed his last!

CHAPTER LXIV.

'T is but a single murder. — Lillo: *Fatal Curiosity.*

It was in a melancholy and thoughtful mood that I rode away from the parsonage. Numerous and hearty were the maledictions I bestowed upon a system of education which, while it was so ineffective with the many, was so pernicious to the few. Miserable delusion (thought I) that encourages the ruin of health and the perversion of intellect by studies that are as unprofitable to the world as they are destructive to the possessor; that incapacitate him for public and unfit him for private life; and that, while they expose him to the ridicule of strangers, render him the victim of his wife and the prey of his domestic!

Busied in such reflections, I rode quickly on, till I found myself once more on the heath. I looked anxiously round

for the conspicuous equipage of Lady Chester, but in vain the ground was thin; nearly all the higher orders had retired; the common people, grouped together, and clamouring noisily, were withdrawing; and the shrill voices of the itinerant hawkers of cards and bills had, at length, subsided into silence. I rode over the ground, in the hope of finding some solitary straggler of our party. Alas! there was not one; and, with much reluctance at, and distaste to, my lonely retreat, I turned in a homeward direction from the course.

The evening had already set in, but there was a moon in the cold, gray sky, that I could almost have thanked, in a sonnet, for a light which I felt was never more welcomely dispensed, when I thought of the cross-roads and dreary country I had to pass before I reached the longed-for haven of Chester Park. After I had left the direct road, the wind, which had before been piercingly keen, fell, and I perceived a dark cloud behind, which began slowly to overtake my steps. I care little, in general, for the discomfort of a shower; yet, as when we are in one misfortune we always exaggerate the consequence of a new one, I looked upon my dark pursuer with a very impatient and petulant frown, and set my horse on a trot, much more suitable to my inclination than his own. Indeed, he seemed fully alive to the cornless state of the parson's stable, and evinced his sense of the circumstance by a very languid mode of progression, and a constant attempt, whenever his pace abated, and I suffered the rein to slumber upon his neck, to crop the rank grass that sprang up on either side of our road. I had proceeded about three miles on my way, when I heard the clatter of hoofs behind me. My even pace soon suffered me to be overtaken; and as the stranger checked his horse, when he was nearly by my side, I turned towards him, and beheld Sir John Tyrrell.

"Well," said he, "this is really fortunate; for I began to fear I should have my ride, this cold evening, entirely to myself."

"I imagined that you had long reached Chester Park by this time," said I. "Did not you leave the course with our party?"

"No," answered Tyrrell; "I had business at Newmarket with a rascally fellow of the name of Dawson. He lost to me rather a considerable wager, and asked me to come to town with him after the race, in order to pay me. As he said he lived on the direct road to Chester Park, and would direct and even accompany me through all the difficult parts of the ride, I the less regretted not joining Chester and his party; and you know, Pelham, that when pleasure pulls one way and money another, it is all over with the first. Well, — to return to my rascal,— would you believe that when we got to Newmarket he left me at the inn, in order, he said, to fetch the money; and after having kept me in a cold room with a smoky chimney for more than an hour without making his appearance, I sallied out into the town, and found Mr. Dawson quietly seated in a hell with that scoundrel Thornton, whom I did not conceive, till then, he was acquainted with. It seems that he was to win, at hazard, sufficient to pay his wager! You may fancy my anger and the consequent increase to it, when he rose from the table, approached me, expressed his sorrow, d—d his ill-luck, and informed me that he could not pay me for three months. You know that I could not ride home with such a fellow; he might have robbed me by the way: so I returned to my inn, dined, ordered my horse, set off, inquired my way of every passenger I passed, and after innumerable misdirections — here I am!"

"I cannot sympathize with you," said I, "since I am benefited by your misfortunes. But do you think it very necessary to trot so fast? I fear my horse can scarcely keep up with yours."

Tyrrell cast an impatient glance at my panting steed. "It is cursed unlucky you should be so badly mounted, and we shall have a pelting shower presently."

In complaisance to Tyrrell, I endeavoured to accelerate my steed. The roads were rough and stony; and I had scarcely got the tired animal into a sharp trot, before — whether or no by some wrench among the deep ruts and flinty causeway — he fell suddenly lame. The impetuosity of Tyrrell broke out

in oaths, and we both dismounted to examine the cause of my horse's hurt, in the hope that it might only be the intrusion of some pebble between the shoe and the hoof. While we were yet investigating the cause of our misfortune, two men on horseback overtook us. Tyrrell looked up. "By Heaven," said he in a low tone, "it 's that dog Dawson and his worthy coadjutor Tom Thornton."

"What 's the matter, gentlemen?" cried the bluff voice of the latter. "Can I be of any assistance?" and without waiting our reply, he dismounted and came up to us. He had no sooner felt the horse's leg than he assured us it was a most severe strain and that the utmost I could effect would be to walk the brute gently home.

As Tyrrell broke out into impatient violence at this speech, the sharper looked up at him with an expression of countenance I by no means liked, but in a very civil and even respectful tone, said, "If you wish, Sir John, to reach Chester Park sooner than Mr. Pelham can possibly do, suppose you ride on with us; I will put you in the direct road before I quit you." (Good breeding, thought I, to propose leaving me to find my own way through this labyrinth of ruts and stones!) However, Tyrrell, who was in a vile humour, refused the offer, in no very courteous manner; and added that he should continue with me as long as he could, and did not doubt that when he left me he should be able to find his own way. Thornton pressed the invitation still closer, and even offered, *sotto voce*, to send Dawson on before, should the baronet object to his company.

"Pray, sir," said Tyrrell, "leave me alone and busy yourself about your own affairs." After so tart a reply, Thornton thought it useless to say more; he remounted, and with a silent and swaggering nod of familiarity, soon rode away with his companion.

"I am sorry," said I, as we were slowly proceeding, "that you rejected Thornton's offer."

"Why, to say truth," answered Tyrrell, "I have so very bad an opinion of him that I was almost afraid to trust myself in his company on so dreary a road. I have nearly (and he

knows it) to the amount of two thousand pounds about me; for I was very fortunate in my betting-book to-day."

"I know nothing about racing regulations," said I; "but I thought one never paid sums of that amount upon the ground?"

"Ah!" answered Tyrrell, "but I won this sum, which is eighteen hundred pounds, of a country squire from Norfolk, who said he did not know when he should see me again, and insisted on paying me on the spot: 'faith, I was not nice in the matter. Thornton was standing by at the time, and I did not half like the turn of his eye when he saw me put it up. Do you know, too," continued Tyrrell after a pause, "that I had a d—d fellow dodging me all day, and yesterday too; wherever I go I am sure to see him. He seems constantly, though distantly, to follow me; and what is worse, he wraps himself up so well, and keeps at so cautious a distance, that I can never catch a glimpse of his face."

I know not why, but at that moment the recollection of the muffled figure I had seen upon the course flashed upon me.

"Does he wear a long horseman's cloak?"

"He does," answered Tyrrell, in surprise; "have you observed him?"

"I saw such a person on the race-ground," replied I, "but only for an instant!"

Further conversation was suspended by a few heavy drops which fell upon us; the cloud had passed over the moon, and was hastening rapidly and loweringly over our heads. Tyrrell was neither of an age, a frame, nor a temper, to be so indifferent to a hearty wetting as myself.

"Come, come," he cried, "you *must* put on that beast of yours. I can't get wet for all the horses in the world."

I was not much pleased with the dictatorial tone of this remark. "It is impossible," said I, "especially as the horse is not my own, and seems considerably lamer than at first; but let me not detain you."

"Well!" cried Tyrrell in a raised and angry voice, which pleased me still less than his former remark; "but how am I to find my way if I leave you?"

"Keep straight on," said I, "for a mile farther, then a sign-post will direct you to the left; after a short time you will have a steep hill to descend, at the bottom of which is a large pool and a singularly-shaped tree; then again keep straight on, till you pass a house belonging to Mr. Dawson —"

"Hang it, Pelham, make haste!" exclaimed Tyrrell impatiently, as the rain began now to descend fast and heavy.

"When you have passed that house," I resumed coolly, rather enjoying his petulance, "you must bear to the right for six miles, and you will be at Chester Park in less than an hour."

Tyrrell made no reply, but put spurs to his horse. The pattering rain and the angry heavens soon drowned the last echoes of the receding hoof-clang.

For myself, I looked in vain for a tree, not even a shrub was to be found; the fields lay bare on either side, with no other partition but a dead hedge and a deep dike. "Melius fit patientia," etc., thought I, as Horace said, and Vincent *would* say; and in order to divert my thoughts from my situation, I turned them towards my diplomatic success with Lord Chester. Presently, for I think scarcely five minutes had elapsed since Tyrrell's departure, a horseman passed me at a sharp pace: the moon was hid by the dense cloud; and the night, though not wholly dark, was dim and obscured, so that I could only catch the outline of the flitting figure. A thrill of fear crept over me when I saw that it was enveloped in a horseman's cloak. I soon rallied. "There are more cloaks in the world than one," said I to myself; "besides, even if it be Tyrrell's dodger, as he calls him, the baronet is better mounted than any highwayman since the days of Du Val; and is, moreover, strong enough and cunning enough to take admirable care of himself." With this reflection I dismissed the occurrence from my thoughts, and once more returned to self-congratulations upon my incomparable genius. "I shall now," I thought, "have well earned my seat in Parliament: Dawton will indisputably be, if not the prime, the principal minister in rank and influence. He cannot fail to promote me for his own sake, as well as mine; and when I have once

fairly got my legs in St. Stephen's, I shall soon have my hands in office: 'power,' says some one, 'is a snake that when it once finds a hole into which it can introduce its head, soon manages to wriggle in the rest of its body.'"

With such meditations I endeavoured to beguile the time, and cheat myself into forgetfulness of the lameness of my horse and the dripping wetness of his rider. At last the storm began sullenly to subside; one impetuous torrent, tenfold more violent than those that had preceded it, was followed by a momentary stillness, which was again broken by a short relapse of a less formidable severity, and, the moment it ceased, the beautiful moon broke out, the cloud rolled heavily away, and the sky shone forth, as fair and smiling as Lady —— at a ball, after she has been beating her husband at home. But at that instant, or perhaps a second before the storm ceased, I thought I heard the sound of a human cry. I paused, and my heart stood still; I could have heard a gnat hum: the sound was not repeated; my ear caught nothing but the plashing of the rain-drops from the dead hedges, and the murmur of the swollen dikes, as the waters pent within them rolled hurriedly on. By and by, an owl came suddenly from behind me, and screamed as it flapped across my path; that, too, went rapidly away: and with a smile at what I deemed my own fancy, I renewed my journey. I soon came to the precipitous descent I have before mentioned; I dismounted, for safety, from my drooping and jaded horse, and led him down the hill. At a distance beyond I saw something dark moving on the grass which bordered the road: as I advanced, it started forth from the shadow, and fled rapidly before me, in the moonshine; it was a riderless horse. A chilling foreboding seized me: I looked round for some weapon, such as the hedge might afford; and finding a strong stick of tolerable weight and thickness, I proceeded more cautiously, but more fearlessly than before. As I wound down the hill, the moonlight fell full upon the remarkable and lonely tree I had observed in the morning. Bare, wan, and giantlike, as it rose amidst the surrounding waste, it borrowed even a more startling and ghostly appearance from the

cold and lifeless moonbeams which fell around and upon it like a shroud. The retreating steed I had driven before me paused by this tree. I hastened my steps, as if by an involuntary impulse, as well as the enfeebled animal I was leading would allow me, and discovered a horseman galloping across the waste at full speed. The ground over which he passed was steeped in the moonshine, and I saw the long and disguising cloak, in which he was enveloped, as clearly as by the light of day. I paused; and as I was following him with my looks, my eye fell upon some obscure object by the left side of the pool. I threw my horse's rein over the hedge, and firmly grasping my stick, hastened to the spot. As I approached the object I perceived that it was a human figure: it was lying still and motionless; the limbs were half immersed in the water; the face was turned upwards; the side and throat were wet with a deep red stain,—it was of blood: the thin, dark hairs of the head were clotted together over a frightful and disfiguring contusion. I bent over the face in a shuddering and freezing silence. It was the countenance of Sir John Tyrrell!

CHAPTER LXV.

> Marry, he was dead—
> And the right valiant Banquo walked too late;
> Whom you may say, if it please you, Fleance killed,
> For Fleance fled!—*Macbeth.*

It is a fearful thing even to the hardest nerves to find ourselves suddenly alone with the dead. How much more so if we have, but a breathing interval before, moved and conversed with the warm and living likeness of the motionless clay before us!

And this was the man from whom I had parted in coldness,—almost in anger,—at a word,—a breath! I took up the

heavy hand: it fell from my grasp; and as it did so, I thought a change passed over the livid countenance. I was deceived; it was but a light cloud flitting over the moon; it rolled away, and the placid and guiltless light shone over that scene of dread and blood, making more wild and chilling the eternal contrast of earth and heaven,—man and his Maker, passion and immutability, death and eternal life.

But that was not a moment for reflection; a thousand thoughts hurried upon me, and departed as swift and confusedly as they came. My mind seemed a jarring and benighted chaos of the faculties which were its elements; and I had stood several minutes over the corpse before, by a vigorous effort, I shook off the stupor that possessed me, and began to think of the course that it now behooved me to pursue.

The house I had noted in the morning was, as I knew, within a few minutes' walk of the spot; but it belonged to Dawson, upon whom the first weight of my suspicions rested. I called to mind the disreputable character of that man, and the still more daring and hardened one of his companion Thornton. I remembered the reluctance of the deceased to accompany them and the well-grounded reason he assigned; and my suspicions amounting to certainty, I resolved rather to proceed to Chester Park, and there give the alarm, than to run the unnecessary risk of interrupting the murderers in the very lair of their retreat. And yet, thought I, as I turned slowly away, how, if *they* were the villains, is the appearance and flight of the disguised horseman to be accounted for?

Then flashed upon my recollection all that Tyrrell had said of the dogged pursuit of that mysterious person, and the circumstance of his having passed me upon the road so immediately after Tyrrell had quitted me. These reflections (associated with a name that I did not dare breathe even to myself, although I could not suppress a suspicion which accounted at once for the pursuit, and even for the deed) made me waver in, and almost renounce, my former condemnation of Thornton and his friend; and by the time I reached the white gate and dwarfish avenue which led to Dawson's house,

I resolved, at all events, to halt at the solitary mansion, and mark the effect my information would cause.

A momentary fear for my own safety came across me, but was as instantly dismissed; for even supposing the friends were guilty, still it would be no object to them to extend their remorseless villany to me; and I knew that I could sufficiently command my own thoughts to prevent any suspicion I might form from mounting to my countenance or discovering itself in my manner.

There was a light in the upper story; it burned still and motionless. How holy seemed the tranquillity of life contrasted with the forced and fearful silence of the death scene I had just witnessed! I rang twice at the door; no one came to answer my summons, but the light in the upper window moved hurriedly to and fro.

"They are coming," said I to myself. No such thing; the casement above was opened; I looked up, and discovered to my infinite comfort and delight, a blunderbuss protruded eight inches out of the window in a direct line with my head; I receded close to the wall with no common precipitation.

"Get away, you rascal," said a gruff but trembling voice, "or I 'll blow your brains out."

"My good sir," I replied, still keeping my situation, "I come on urgent business, either to Mr. Thornton or Mr. Dawson; and you had better, therefore, if the delay is not very inconvenient, defer the honour you offer me till I have delivered my message."

"Master and 'Squire Thornton are not returned from Newmarket, and we cannot let any one in till they come home," replied the voice, in a tone somewhat mollified by my rational remonstrance; and while I was deliberating what rejoinder to make, a rough, red head, like Liston's in a farce, poked itself cautiously out under cover of the blunderbuss, and seemed to reconnoitre my horse and myself. Presently another head, but attired in the more civilized gear of a cap and flowers, peeped over the first person's left shoulder; the view appeared to reassure them both.

"Sir," said the female, "my husband and Mr. Thornton are

not returned; and we have been so much alarmed of late by an attack on the house that I cannot admit any one till their return."

"Madam," I replied, reverently doffing my hat, "I do not like to alarm you by mentioning the information I should have given to Mr. Dawson; only oblige me by telling them, on their return, to look beside the pool on the common: they will then do as best pleases them."

Upon this speech, which certainly was of no agreeable tendency, the blunderbuss palpitated so violently, that I thought it highly imprudent to tarry any longer in so perilous a vicinity; accordingly, I made the best of my way out of the avenue, and once more resumed my road to Chester Park.

I arrived there at length; the gentlemen were still in the dining-room. I sent out for Lord Chester, and communicated the scene I had witnessed, and the cause of my delay.

"What! Brown Bob lamed?" said he, "and Tyrrell — poor — poor fellow, how shocking! We must send instantly. Here, John! Tom! Wilson!" and his lordship shouted and rang the bell in an indescribable agitation.

The under butler appeared, and Lord Chester began: "My head groom — Sir John Tyrrell is murdered — violent sprain in off leg — send lights with Mr. Pelham — poor gentleman — an express instantly to Dr. Physicon — Mr. Pelham will tell you all — Brown Bob — his throat cut from ear to ear — what shall be done?" and with this coherent and explanatory harangue, the marquis sank down in his chair in a sort of hysteric.

The under butler looked at him in suspicious bewilderment.

"Come," said I, "I will explain what his lordship means;" and, taking the man out of the room, I gave him in brief the necessary particulars. I ordered a fresh horse for myself, and four horsemen to accompany me. While these were preparing the news was rapidly spreading, and I was soon surrounded by the whole house. Many of the gentlemen wished to accompany me; and Lord Chester, who had at last recovered from his stupor, insisted upon heading the search. We

set off, to the number of fourteen, and soon arrived at Dawson's house; the light in the upper room was still burning. We rang, and after a brief pause Thornton himself opened the door to us. He looked pale and agitated.

"How shocking!" he said directly; "we are only just returned from the spot."

"Accompany us, Mr. Thornton," said I sternly, and fixing my eye upon him.

"Certainly," was his immediate answer, without testifying any confusion; "I will fetch my hat." He went into the house for a moment.

"Do you suspect these people?" whispered Lord Chester.

"Not suspect," said I, "but *doubt.*"

We proceeded down the avenue: "Where is Mr. Dawson?" said I to Thornton.

"Oh, within!" answered Thornton. "Shall I fetch him?"

"Do," was my brief reply.

Thornton was absent some minutes; when he reappeared, Dawson was following him. "Poor fellow," said he to me in a low tone; "he was so shocked by the sight that he is still all in a panic; besides, as you will see, he is half-drunk still."

I made no answer, but looked narrowly at Dawson; he was evidently, as Thornton said, greatly intoxicated; his eyes swam, and his feet staggered as he approached us; yet, through all the natural effects of drunkenness, he seemed nervous and frightened. This, however, might be the natural (and consequently innocent) effect of the mere sight of an object so full of horror; and, accordingly, I laid little stress upon it.

We reached the fatal spot; the body seemed perfectly unmoved. "Why," said I, apart to Thornton, while all the rest were crowding fearfully round the corpse,—"why did you not take the body within?"

"I was going to return here with our servant for that purpose," answered the gambler; "for poor Dawson was both too drunk and too nervous to give me any assistance."

"And how came it," I rejoined, eying him searchingly,

"that you and your friend had not returned home when I called there, although you had both long since passed me on the road, and I had never overtaken you?"

Thornton, without any hesitation, replied: "Because, during the violence of the shower, we cut across the fields to an old shed, which we recollected, and we remained there till the rain had ceased."

"They are probably innocent," thought I; and I turned to look once more at the body, which our companions had now raised. There was upon the head a strong contusion, as if inflicted by some blunt and heavy instrument. The fingers of the right hand were deeply gashed, and one of them almost dissevered: the unfortunate man had, in all probability, grasped the sharp weapon from which his other wounds proceeded: these were one wide cut along the throat, and another in the side; either of them would have occasioned his death.

In loosening the clothes, another wound was discovered, but apparently of a less fatal nature; and in lifting the body, the broken blade of a long sharp instrument, like a case-knife, was discovered. It was the opinion of the surgeon who afterwards examined the body that the blade had been broken by coming in contact with one of the rib bones; and it was by this that he accounted for the slightness of the last-mentioned wound. I looked carefully among the fern and long grass to see if I could discover any other token of the murderer: Thornton assisted me. At the distance of some feet from the body I thought I perceived something glitter. I hastened to the place, and picked up a miniature. I was just going to cry out, when Thornton whispered: "Hush! I know the picture; it is as I suspected!"

An icy thrill ran through my very heart. With a desperate but trembling hand, I cleansed from the picture the blood in which, notwithstanding its distance from the corpse, the greater part of it was bathed. I looked upon the features; they were those of a young and singularly beautiful female. I recognized them not: I turned to the other side of the miniature; upon it were braided two locks of hair,—one was the

long, dark ringlet of a woman, the other was of a light auburn. Beneath were four letters. I looked eagerly at them. "My eyes are dim," said I, in a low tone to Thornton, "I cannot trace the initials."

"But *I* can," replied he, in the same whispered key, but with a savage exultation, which made my heart stand still: "they are G.D., R.G.; they are the initials of Gertrude Douglas and *Reginald Glanville.*"

I looked up at the speaker; our eyes met; I grasped his hand vehemently. He understood me. "Put it up," said he; "we will keep the secret." All this, so long in the recital, passed in the rapidity of a moment.

"Have you found anything there, Pelham?" shouted one of our companions.

"No!" cried I, thrusting the miniature into my bosom, and turning unconcernedly away.

We carried the corpse to Dawson's house. The poor wife was in fits. We heard her scream as we laid the body upon a table in the parlour.

"What more can be done?" said Lord Chester.

"Nothing," was the general answer. No excitement makes people insensible to the chance of catching cold.

"Let us go home, then, and send to the nearest magistrate," exclaimed our host; and this proposal required no repetition.

On our way, Chester said to me, "That fellow Dawson looked devilish uneasy; don't you still suspect him and his friend?"

"I *do not!*" answered I, emphatically.

CHAPTER LXVI.

And now I 'm in the world alone,
. . . . .
But why for others should I groan,
When none will sigh for me? — Byron.

The whole country was in confusion at the news of the murder. All the myrmidons of justice were employed in the most active research for the murderers. Some few persons were taken up on suspicion, but were as instantly discharged. Thornton and Dawson underwent a long and rigorous examination: but no single tittle of evidence against them appeared; they were consequently dismissed. The only suspicious circumstance against them was their delay on the road; but the cause given, the same as Thornton had at first assigned to me, was probable and natural. The shed was indicated, and, as if to confirm Thornton's account, a glove belonging to that person was found there. To crown all, my own evidence, in which I was constrained to mention the circumstance of the muffled horseman having passed me on the road, and being found by me on the spot itself, threw the whole weight of suspicion upon that man, whoever he might be.

All attempts, however, to discover him were in vain. It was ascertained that a man, muffled in a cloak, was *seen* at Newmarket, but not remarkably observed; it was also discovered that a person so habited had put up a gray horse to bait in one of the inns at Newmarket; but in the throng of strangers, neither the horse nor its owner had drawn down any particular remark.

On further inquiry, testimony differed: *four* or *five* men in cloaks had left their horses at the stables; one hostler changed the color of the steed to brown, a second to black, a third deposed that the gentleman was remarkably tall, and the waiter swore solemnly he had given a glass of brandy-and-water to

an *unked*-looking gentleman in a cloak, who was remarkably short. In fine, no material point could be proved; and, though the officers were still employed in active search, they could trace nothing that promised a speedy discovery.

As for myself, as soon as I decently could, I left Chester Park, with a most satisfactory despatch in my pocket from its possessor to Lord Dawton, and found myself once more on the road to London.

Alas! how different were my thoughts, how changed the temper of my mind, since I had last travelled that road! Then I was full of hope, energy, ambition,—of interest for Reginald Glanville,—of adoration for his sister; and *now*, I leaned back listless and dispirited, without a single feeling to gladden the restless and feverish despair which, ever since *that* night, had possessed me. What was ambition henceforth to me? The most selfish amongst us must have some human being *to* whom to refer,—*with* whom to connect, to associate, to treasure, the triumphs and gratifications of self. Where now for my heart was such a being? My earliest friend, for whom my esteem was the greater for his sorrows, my interest the keener for his mystery, Reginald Glanville, was a murderer! a dastardly, a barbarous felon, whom the chance of an instant might convict; and she,—she, the only woman in the world I had ever really loved,—who had ever pierced the thousand folds of my ambitious and scheming heart,—*she* was the sister of the assassin.

Then came over my mind the savage and exulting eye of Thornton when it read the damning record of Glanville's guilt; and in spite of my horror at the crime of my former friend, I trembled for his safety; nor was I satisfied with myself at my prevarication as a witness. It is true that I had told the truth, but I had concealed *all* the truth; and my heart swelled proudly and bitterly against the miniature which I still concealed in my bosom.

To save a criminal in whose safety I was selfishly concerned, I felt that I had tampered with my honour, paltered with the truth, and broken what justice, not over harshly, deemed a peremptory and inviolable duty.

It was with a heightened pulse and a burning cheek that I entered London; before midnight I was in a high fever; they sent for the vultures of physic; I was bled copiously; I was kept quiet in bed for six days; at the end of that time, my constitution and youth restored me. I took up one of the newspapers listlessly; Glanville's name struck me: I read the paragraph which contained it; it was a high-flown and fustian panegyric on his genius and promise. I turned to another column; it contained a long speech he had the night before made in the House of Commons.

"Can such things be?" thought I; yea, and thereby hangs a secret and an anomaly in the human heart. A man may commit the greatest of crimes, and (if no other succeed to it) it changes not the current of his being; to all the world,—to all intents,—for all objects he may be the same. He may equally serve his country, equally benefit his friends,—be generous, brave, benevolent, all that he was before. *One* crime, however heinous, does not necessarily cause a revolution in the system: it is only the *perpetual* course of sins, vices, follies, however insignificant they may seem, which alters the nature and hardens the heart.

My mother was out of town when I returned there. They had written to her during my illness; and while I was yet musing over the day's journal, a letter from her was put into my hand. I transcribe it.

My dearest Henry, — How dreadfully uneasy I am about you! write to me directly. I would come to town myself, but am staying with dear Lady Dawton, who will not hear of my going; and I cannot offend her for *your* sake. By the by, why have you not called upon Lord Dawton? but, I forget, you have been ill. My dear, dear child, I am wretched about you, and how pale your illness will make you look! just, too, as the best part of the season is coming on. How unlucky! Pray don't wear a black cravat when you next call on Lady Roseville: but choose a very fine *batiste* one; it will make you look rather delicate than ill. What physician do you have? I hope in God that it is Sir Henry Halford. I shall be too miserable if it is not. I am sure no one can conceive the anguish I suffer. Your father, too, poor man, has been laid up with the gout for the last three days. Keep up your spirits,

my dearest child, and get some light books to entertain you: but, pray, as soon as you *are* well, do go to Lord Dawton's; he is dying to see you; but be sure not to catch cold. How did you like Lady Chester? Pray take the greatest care of yourself, and write soon to

Your wretched and most affectionate mother,

F. P.

How dreadfully shocking about that poor Sir John Tyrrell!

I tossed the letter from me. Heaven pardon me if the misanthropy of my mood made me less grateful for the maternal solicitude than I should otherwise have been.

I took up one of the numerous books with which my table was covered: it was a worldly work of one of the French reasoners; it gave a new turn to my thoughts; my mind reverted to its former projects of ambition. Who does not know what active citizens private misfortune makes us? The public is like the pools of Bethesda: we all hasten there to plunge in and rid ourselves of our afflictions.

I drew my portfolio to me, and wrote to Lord Dawton. Three hours after I had sent the note he called upon me. I gave him Lord Chester's letter, but he had already received from that nobleman a notification of my success. He was profuse in his compliments and thanks.

"And, do you know," added the statesman, "that you have quite made a conquest of Lord Guloseton? He speaks of you publicly in the highest terms; I wish we could get him and his votes. We *must* be strengthened, my dear Pelham; everything depends on the crisis."

"Are you certain of the cabinet?" I asked.

"Yes: it is not yet publicly announced; but it is fully known amongst us who comes in and who stays out. I am to have the place of ——."

"I congratulate your lordship from my heart. What post do you design for me?"

Lord Dawton changed countenance. "Why — really — Pelham, we have not yet filled up the lesser appointments, but you shall be well remembered, — *well*, my dear Pelham; be sure of it."

I looked at the noble speaker with a glance which, I flatter myself, is peculiar to me. "Is," thought I, "the embryo minister playing upon me as upon one of his dependent tools? Let him beware!" The anger of the moment passed away.

"Lord Dawton," said I, "one word, and I have done discussing my claims for the present. Do you mean to place me in Parliament as soon as you are in the cabinet? What else you intend for me, I question not."

"Yes, assuredly, Pelham. How can you doubt it?"

"Enough! — and now read this letter from France."

. . . . . .

Two days after my interview with Lord Dawton, as I was riding leisurely through the Green Park, in no very bright and social mood, one of the favoured carriages, whose owners are permitted to say, "Hic iter est nobis," overtook me. A sweet voice ordered the coachman to stop, and then addressed itself to me.

"What, the hero of Chester Park returned without having once narrated his adventures to me?"

"Beautiful Lady Roseville," said I, "I plead guilty of negligence, — not treason. I forgot, it is true, to appear before you, but I forget not the devotion of my duty now that I behold you. Command, and I obey."

"See, Ellen," said Lady Roseville, turning to a bending and blushing countenance beside her, which I then first perceived, — "see what it is to be a knight-errant; even his language is worthy of Amadis of Gaul; but — [again addressing me] your adventures are really too shocking a subject to treat lightly. We lay our serious orders on you to come to our castle this night; we shall be alone."

"Willingly shall I repair to your bower, fayre ladie; but tell me, I beseech you, how many persons are signified in the word 'alone'?"

"Why," answered Lady Roseville, "I fear *we may* have a few people with us; but I think, Ellen, we may promise our chevalier that the number shall not exceed twelve."

I bowed and rode on. What worlds would I not have given to have touched the hand of the countess's companion, though

only for an instant. But — and that fearful *but* chilled me like an ice-bolt. I put spurs to my horse, and dashed fiercely onwards. There was rather a high wind stirring, and I bent my face from it, so as scarcely to see the course of my spirited and impatient horse.

"What ho, sir! — what ho!" cried a shrill voice, — "for Heaven's sake, don't ride over me *before* dinner, whatever you do after it."

I pulled up. "Ah, Lord Guloseton! how happy I am to see you; pray forgive my blindness and my horse's stupidity."

"'T is an ill wind," answered the noble gourmand, "which blows nobody good; an excellent proverb, the veracity of which is daily attested; for, however unpleasant a keen wind may be, there is no doubt of its being a marvellous whetter of that greatest of Heaven's blessings, — *an appetite.* Little, however, did I expect that, besides blowing me a relish for my *sauté de foie gras,* it would also blow me one who might probably be a partaker of my enjoyment. Honour me with your company at dinner to-day."

"What saloon will you dine in, my Lord Lucullus?" said I, in allusion to the custom of the epicure by whose name I addressed him.

"The saloon of Diana," replied Guloseton; "for she must certainly have shot the fine buck of which Lord H—— sent me the haunch that we shall have to-day. It is the true old Meynell breed. I ask you not to meet Mr. So-and-so and Lord What-d'ye-call-him: I ask you to meet a *sauté de foie gras* and a haunch of venison."

"I will most certainly pay them my respects. Never did I know before how far *things* were better company than persons. Your lordship has taught me that great truth."

"God bless me!" cried Guloseton, with an air of vexation. "Here comes the Duke of Stilton, a horrid person, who told me the other day, at my *petit dîner,* when I apologized to him for some strange error of my *artiste,* by which common vinegar had been substituted for Chili, — who told me — what think you he told me? You cannot guess; he told me, for-

sooth, that he did not care what he ate; and, for his part, he could make a very good dinner off a beefsteak! Why the deuce, then, did he come and dine with *me?* Could he have said anything more cutting? Imagine my indignation when I looked round my table, and saw so many good things thrown away upon such an idiot."

Scarcely were the last words out of the gourmand's mouth before the noble personage so designated joined us. It amused me to see Guloseton's contempt (which he scarcely took the pains to suppress) of a person whom all Europe honoured, and his evident weariness of a companion whose society every one else would have coveted as the *summum bonum* of worldly distinction. As for me, feeling anything but social, I soon left the ill-matched pair and rode into the other park.

Just as I entered it, I perceived, on a dull yet cross-looking pony, Mr. Wormwood, of bitter memory. Although we had not met since our mutual sojourn at Sir Lionel Garrett's, and were then upon very cool terms of acquaintance, he seemed resolved to recognize and claim me.

"My dear sir," said he, with a ghastly smile, "I am rejoiced once more to see you; bless me, how pale you look. I heard you had been very ill. Pray, have you been yet to that man who professes to cure consumption in the worst stages?"

"Yes," said I, "he read me two or three letters of reference from the patients he had cured. His last, he said, was a gentleman very far gone,—a Mr. Wormwood."

"Oh, you are pleased to be facetious," said the cynic, coldly; "but pray do tell me about that horrid affair at Chester Park. How disagreeable it must have been to you to be taken up on *suspicion of the murder!*"

"Sir," said I haughtily, "what do you mean?"

"Oh, you were not, wer' n't you? Well, I always thought it unlikely; but every one says so—"

"My dear sir," I rejoined, "how long is it since you have minded what everybody says? If I were so foolish, I should not be riding with you now: but *I* have always said, in contradiction to everybody and even in spite of being universally laughed at for my singular opinion, that you, my dear Mr.

Wormwood, were by no means silly nor ignorant nor insolent nor intrusive; that you were, on the contrary, a very decent author, and a very good sort of man; and that you were so benevolent that you daily granted to some one or other the greatest happiness in your power; it is a happiness I am now about to enjoy, and it consists in wishing you '*good-by*'!" And without waiting for Mr. Wormwood's answer, I gave the rein to my horse and was soon lost among the crowd which had now begun to assemble.

Hyde Park is a stupid place. The English of the fashionable world make business an enjoyment and enjoyment a business: they are born without a smile; they rove about public places like so many easterly winds,—cold, sharp, and cutting; or like a group of fogs on a frosty day, sent out of his hall by Boreas for the express purpose of *looking black at one another*. When they ask you "how you do," you would think they were measuring the length of your coffin. They are ever, it is true, *labouring* to be agreeable: but they are like Sisyphus; the stone they rolled up the hill with so much toil, runs down again, and hits you a thump on the legs. They are sometimes *polite*, but invariably *uncivil;* their warmth is always artificial,—their cold never: they are stiff without dignity, and cringing without manners. They offer you an affront, and call it "plain truth;" they wound your feelings, and tell you it is manly "to speak their minds;" at the same time, while they have neglected all the graces and charities of artifice, they have adopted all its falsehood and deceit. While they profess to abhor servility, they adulate the peerage; while they tell you they care not a rush for the minister, they move heaven and earth for an invitation from the minister's wife. Then their amusements!—the heat, the dust, the sameness, the slowness of that odious park in the morning; and the same exquisite scene repeated in the evening, on the condensed stage of a rout-room, where one has more heat with less air, and a narrower dungeon with diminished possibility of escape!—we wander about like the damned in the story of "Vathek," and we pass our lives, like the royal philosopher of Prussia, in conjugating the verb, *Je m'ennuie.*

CHAPTER LXVII.

In solo vivendi causa palato est. — Juvenal.

They would talk of nothing but high life, and high-lived company; with other fashionable topics, such as pictures, taste, Shakspeare, and the musical glasses. — *Vicar of Wakefield.*

The reflections which closed the last chapter will serve to show that I was in no very amiable or convivial temper when I drove to Lord Guloseton's dinner. However, in the world, it matters little what may be our real mood, the mask hides the bent brow and the writhing lip.

Guloseton was stretched on his sofa, gazing with upward eye at the beautiful Venus which hung above his hearth. "You are welcome, Pelham; I am worshipping my household divinity!"

I prostrated myself on the opposite sofa, and made some answer to the classical epicure, which made us both laugh heartily. We then talked of pictures, painters, poets, the ancients, and Dr. Henderson on Wines; we gave ourselves up without restraint to the enchanting fascination of the last-named subject: and, our mutual enthusiasm confirming our cordiality, we went downstairs to our dinner as charmed with each other as boon companions always should be.

"This is as it should be," said I, looking round at the well-filled table, and the sparkling spirits immersed in the ice-pails; "a genuine *friendly* dinner. It is very rarely that I dare intrust myself to such extempore hospitality,—'miserum est aliena vivere quadra;' a friendly dinner, a family meal, are things from which I fly with undisguised aversion. It is very hard that in England one cannot have a friend, on pain of being shot or poisoned; if you refuse his familiar invitations, he thinks you mean to affront him, and says something rude, for which you are forced to challenge him; if you

accept them you perish beneath the weight of boiled mutton and turnips, or—"

"My dear friend," interrupted Guloseton, with his mouth full, "it is very true: but this is no time for talking; *let us eat.*"

I acknowledged the justice of the rebuke, and we did not interchange another word beyond the exclamations of surprise, pleasure, admiration, or dissatisfaction, called up by the objects which engrossed our attention, till we found ourselves alone with our dessert.

When I thought my host had imbibed a sufficient quantity of wine, I once more renewed my attack. I had tried him before upon that point of vanity which is centred in power and political consideration, but in vain; I now bethought me of another. "How few persons there are," said I, "capable of giving even a tolerable dinner: how many capable of admiring one worthy of estimation! I could imagine no greater triumph for the ambitious epicure than to see at his board the first and most honoured persons of the state, all lost in wonder at the depth, the variety, the purity, the munificence of his taste; all forgetting, in the extorted respect which a gratified palate never fails to produce, the more visionary schemes and projects which usually occupy their thoughts;—to find those whom all England are soliciting for posts and power become, in their turn, eager and craving aspirants for places at his table; to know that all the grand movements of the ministerial body are planned and agitated over the inspirations of his viands and the excitement of his wine. From a haunch of venison, like the one of which we have partaken to-day, what noble and substantial measures might arise! From a *sauté de foie* what delicate subtleties of finesse might have their origin! From a ragout *à la financière* what godlike improvements in taxation! Oh, could such a lot be mine, I would envy neither Napoleon for the goodness of his fortune nor S—— for the grandeur of his genius."

Guloseton laughed. "The ardour of your enthusiasm blinds your philosophy, my dear Pelham; like Montesquieu, the liveliness of your fancy often makes you advance paradoxes

which the consideration of your judgment would afterwards condemn. For instance, you must allow that if one had all those fine persons at one's table, one would be forced to talk more, and consequently to eat less: moreover, you would either be excited by your triumph, or you would not,—that is indisputable; if you are *not* excited, you have the bore for nothing; if you *are* excited, you spoil your digestion: nothing is so detrimental to the stomach as the feverish inquietude of the passions. All philosophies recommend calm as the τὸ καλόν of their code; and you must perceive that if, in the course you advise, one has occasional opportunities of pride, one also has those of mortification. Mortification! terrible word! how many apoplexies have arisen from its source! No, Pelham, away with ambition; fill your glass, and learn at last the secret of real philosophy."

"Confound the man!" was my *mental* anathema,—"Long life to the Solomon of *sautés*," was my *audible* exclamation.

"There is something," resumed Guloseton, "in your countenance and manner, at once so frank, lively, and ingenuous, that one is not only prepossessed in your favour, but desirous of your friendship. I tell you, therefore, in confidence, that nothing more amuses me than to see the courtship I receive from each party. I laugh at all the unwise and passionate contests in which others are engaged; and I would as soon think of entering into the chivalry of Don Quixote, or attacking the visionary enemies of the Bedlamite, as of taking part in the fury of politicians. At present, looking afar off at their delirium, I can ridicule it; were I to engage in it, I should be hurt by it. I have no wish to become the weeping instead of the laughing philosopher. I sleep well now: I have no desire to sleep ill. I eat well: why should I lose my appetite? I am undisturbed and unattacked in the enjoyments best suited to my taste: for what purpose should I be hurried into the abuse of the journalists and the witticisms of pamphleteers? I can ask those whom I like to my house: why should I be forced into asking those whom I do not like? In fine, my good Pelham, why should I sour my temper and shorten my life, put my green old age into flannel and physic,

and become, from the happiest of sages, the most miserable of fools? Ambition reminds me of what Bacon says of anger, —'It is like rain, it breaks itself upon that which it falls on.' Pelham, my boy, taste the *Château Margot.*"

However hurt my vanity might be in having so ill succeeded in my object, I could not help smiling with satisfaction at my entertainer's principles of wisdom. My diplomatic honour, however, was concerned, and I resolved yet to gain him. If hereafter I succeeded, it was by a very different method than I had yet taken; meanwhile, I departed from the house of this modern Apicius with a new insight into the great book of mankind, and a new conclusion from its pages; namely, that no virtue can make so perfect a philosopher as the senses. There is no content like that of the epicure; no active code of morals so difficult to conquer as the inertness of his indolence: he is the only being in the world for whom the present has a supremer gratification than the future.

My cabriolet soon whirled me to Lady Roseville's door; the first person I saw in the drawing-room was Ellen. She lifted up her eyes with that familiar sweetness with which they had long since learned to welcome me. "She is the sister of a murderer!" was the thought that curdled my blood, and I bowed distantly and passed on.

I met Vincent. He seemed dispirited and dejected. He already saw how ill his party had succeeded; above all, he was enraged at the idea of the person assigned by rumour to fill the place he had intended for himself. This person was a sort of rival to his lordship, a man of quaintness and quotation, with as much learning as Vincent, equal wit, and — but that personage is still in office, and I will say no more, lest he should think I flatter.

To our subject. It has probably been observed that Lord Vincent had indulged less of late in that peculiar strain of learned humour formerly his wont. The fact is, that he had been playing another part; he wished to remove from his character that appearance of literary coxcombry with which he was accused. He knew well how necessary, in the game of politics, it is to appear no less a man of the world than of

books; and though he was not averse to display his clerkship and scholastic information, yet he endeavoured to make them seem rather valuable for their weight, than curious for their fashion. How few there are in the world who retain, after a certain age, the character originally natural to them! We all get, as it were, a second skin; the little foibles, propensities, eccentricities, we first indulged through affectation, conglomerate and encrust till the artificiality grows into nature.

"Pelham," said Vincent, with a cold smile, "the day will be yours; the battle is not to the strong,—the Whigs will triumph. 'Fugêre pudor, verumque, fidesque; in quorum subiêre locum fraudesque dolique insidiæque, et vis, et amor sceleratus habendi.'"[1]

"A pretty modest quotation," said I. "You must allow, at least, that the *amor sceleratus habendi* was also, in some moderate degree, shared by the *Pudor* and *Fides* which characterize your party; otherwise I am at a loss how to account for the tough struggle against us we have lately had the honour of resisting."

"Never mind," replied Vincent, "I will not refute you: it is not for us, the defeated, to argue with you, the victors. But pray," continued Vincent, with a sneer which pleased me not, "pray, among this windfall of the Hesperian fruit, what nice little apple will fall to your share?"

"My good Vincent, don't let us anticipate; if any such apple should come into my lap, let it not be that of discord between us."

"Who talks of discord?" asked Lady Roseville, joining us.

"Lord Vincent," said I, "fancies himself the celebrated fruit on which was written *detur pulchriori*, to be given to the fairest. Suffer me, therefore, to make him a present to your ladyship."

Vincent muttered something which, as I really liked and esteemed him, I was resolved not to hear; accordingly I turned to another part of the room: there I found Lady Dawton—she was a tall, handsome woman, as proud as a Liberal's

[1] "Shame, Truth, and Faith have flown; in their stead creep in frauds, snares, force, and the rascally love of gain."

wife ought to be. She received me with unusual graciousness, and I sat myself beside her. Three dowagers and an old beau of the old school were already sharing the conversation with the haughty countess. I found that the topic was society.

"No," said the old beau, who was entitled Mr. Clarendon, "society is very different from what it was in my younger days. You remember, Lady Paulet, those delightful parties at D—— House? Where shall we ever find anything like them? Such ease, such company,—even the mixture was so piquant; if one chanced to sit next a *bourgeois*, he was sure to be distinguished for his wit or talent. People were not tolerated, as now, merely for their riches."

"True," cried Lady Dawton, "it is the introduction of low persons, without any single pretension, which spoils the society of the present day!" And the three dowagers sighed amen to this remark.

"And yet," said I, "since I may safely say so *here* without being suspected of a personality in the shape of a compliment, don't you think that without any such mixture we should be very indifferent company? Do we not find those dinners and *soirées* the pleasantest where we see a minister next to a punster, a poet to a prince, and a coxcomb like me next to a beauty like Lady Dawton? The more variety there is in the conversation, the more agreeable it becomes!"

"Very just," answered Mr. Clarendon; "but it is precisely because I wish for that variety that I dislike a miscellaneous society. If one does not know the person beside whom one has the happiness of sitting, what possible subject can one broach with any prudence? I put politics aside, because, thanks to party spirit, we rarely meet those we are strongly opposed to: but if we sneer at the Methodists, our neighbour may be a saint; if we abuse a new book, he may have written it; if we observe that the tone of the pianoforte is bad, his father may have made it; if we complain of the uncertainty of the commercial interest, his uncle may have been gazetted last week. I name no exaggerated instances; on the contrary, I refer these general remarks to particular individuals, whom

all of us have probably met. Thus, you see, that a variety of topics is proscribed in a mixed company, because some one or other of them will be certain to offend."

Perceiving that we listened to him with attention, Mr. Clarendon continued: "Nor is this more than a minor objection to the great mixture prevalent amongst us: a more important one may be found in the universal limitation it produces. The influx of common persons being once permitted, certain sets recede, as it were, from the contamination, and contract into very diminished coteries. Living familiarly solely amongst themselves, however they may be forced into visiting promiscuously, they imbibe certain manners, certain peculiarities in mode and words,—even in an accent or a pronunciation, which are confined to themselves; and whatever differs from these little eccentricities, they are apt to condemn as vulgar and suburban. Now, the fastidiousness of these sets making them difficult of intimate access, even to many of their superiors in actual rank, those very superiors, by a natural feeling in human nature, of prizing what is rare, even if it is worthless, are the first to solicit their acquaintance; and, as a sign that they enjoy it, to *imitate* those peculiarities which are the especial hieroglyphics of this sacred few. The lower grades catch the contagion, and *imitate* those they imagine most likely to know the essentials of the mode; and thus manners, unnatural to all, are transmitted second-hand, third-hand, fourth-hand, till they are ultimately filtered into something worse than no manners at all. Hence, you perceive all people timid, stiff, unnatural, and ill at ease; they are dressed up in a garb that does not fit them, to which they have never been accustomed, and are as little at home as the wild Indian in the boots and garments of the more civilized European."

"And hence," said I, "springs that universal vulgarity of idea, as well as manner, which pervades all society; for nothing is so plebeian as imitation."

"A very evident truism!" said Clarendon. "What I lament most is the injudicious method certain persons took to change this order of things and diminish the *désagréments*

of the mixture we speak of. I remember well, when Almack's was first set up, the intention was to keep away the rich *roturiers* from a place the tone of which was also intended to be contrary to their own. For this purpose the patronesses were instituted, the price of admission made extremely low, and all ostentatious refreshments discarded: it was an admirable institution for the interests of the little oligarchy who ruled it; but it has only increased the general imitation and vulgarity. Perhaps the records of that institution contain things more disgraceful to the aristocracy of England than the whole history of Europe can furnish. And how could the *Messieurs et Mesdames Jourdains* help following the servile and debasing example of *Monseigneur le Duc et Pair?*"

"How strange it is," said one of the dowagers, "that of all the novels on society with which we are annually inundated, there is scarcely one which gives even a tolerable description of it!"

"*Not* strange," said Clarendon, with a formal smile, "if your ladyship will condescend to reflect. Most of the writers upon our little great world have seen nothing of it: at most, they have been occasionally admitted into the routs of the B——'s and C——'s of the second, or rather the third set. A very few are, it is true, gentlemen; but gentlemen who are not writers are as bad as writers who are not gentlemen. In one work, which, since it is popular, I will not name, there is a stiffness and stiltedness in the dialogue and descriptions perfectly ridiculous. The author makes his countesses always talking of their family, and his earls always quoting the peerage. There is as much fuss about state and dignity and pride as if the greatest amongst us were not far too busy with the petty affairs of the world to have time for such lofty vanities. There is only one rule necessary for a clever writer who wishes to delineate the *beau monde*. It is this: let him consider that 'dukes and lords and noble princes' eat, drink, talk, move, exactly the same as any other class of civilized people,—nay, the very subjects in conversation are, for the most part, the same in all sets,—only, perhaps, they are somewhat more familiarly and easily treated with us than

among the lower orders, who fancy rank is distinguished by pomposity, and that state affairs are discussed with the solemnity of a tragedy,—that we are always my lording and my ladying each other,—that we ridicule commoners and curl our hair with Debrett's 'Peerage.'"

We all laughed at this speech, the truth of which we readily acknowledged.

"Nothing," said Lady Dawton, "amuses me more than to see the great distinction which novel-writers make between the titled and the untitled; they seem to be perfectly unaware that a commoner of ancient family and large fortune is very often of far more real rank and estimation, and even *weight*, in what they are pleased to term *fashion*, than many of the members of the Upper House. And what amuses me as much is the *no* distinction they make between all people who have titles: Lord A——, the little baron, is exactly the same as Lord Z——, the great marquis, equally haughty and equally important."

"*Mais, mon Dieu,*" said a little French count, who had just joined us; "how is it that you can expect to find a description of society entertaining when the society itself is so dull?—the closer the copy, the more tiresome it must be. Your manner *pour vous amuser* consists in standing on a crowded staircase, and complaining that you are terribly bored. 'L'on s'accoutume difficilement à une vie qui se passe sur l'escalier.'"

"It is very true," said Clarendon, "we cannot defend ourselves. We are a very sensible, thinking, brave, sagacious, generous, industrious, noble-minded people; but it must be confessed that we are terrible bores to ourselves and all the rest of the world. Lady Paulet, if you *are* going so soon, honour me by accepting my arm."

"You should say your *hand*," said the Frenchman.

"Pardon me," answered the gallant old beau; "I say, with your brave countryman when he lost his legs in battle, and was asked by a lady, like the one who now leans on me, whether he would not sooner have lost his arms? 'No madam,' said he (and this, Monsieur le Comte, is the answer I give to your rebuke), 'I want my hands to guard my heart.'"

Finding our little knot was now broken up, I went into another part of the room, and joined Vincent, Lady Roseville, Ellen, and one or two other persons who were assembled round a table covered with books and prints. Ellen was sitting on one side of Lady Roseville; there was a vacant chair next to her, but I avoided it, and seated myself on the other side of Lady Roseville.

"Pray, Miss Glanville," said Lord Vincent, taking up a thin volume, "do you greatly admire the poems of this lady?"

"What, Mrs. Hemans?" answered Ellen. "I am more enchanted with her poetry than I can express: if that is 'The Forest Sanctuary' which you have taken up, I am sure you will bear me out in my admiration."

Vincent turned over the leaves with the quiet cynicism of manner habitual to him; but his countenance grew animated after he had read two pages. "This is, indeed, beautiful," said he, "really and genuinely beautiful. How singular that such a work should not be more known! I never met with it before. But whose pencil marks are these?"

"Mine, I believe," said Ellen, modestly.

And Lady Roseville turned the conversation upon Lord Byron.

"I must confess, for my part," said Lord Edward Neville (an author of some celebrity and more merit), "that I am exceedingly weary of those doleful ditties with which we have been favoured for so many years. No sooner had Lord Byron declared himself unhappy, than every young gentleman with a pale face and dark hair thought himself justified in frowning in the glass and writing Odes to Despair. All persons who could scribble two lines were sure to make them into rhymes of 'blight' and 'night.' Never was there so grand a *penchant* for the *triste*."

"It would be interesting enough," observed Vincent, "to trace the origin of this melancholy mania. People are wrong to attribute it to poor Lord Byron: it certainly came from Germany; perhaps Werther was the first hero of that school."

"There seems," said I, "an unaccountable prepossession among all persons to imagine that whatever seems gloomy

must be profound, and whatever is cheerful must be shallow They have put poor Philosophy into deep mourning, and given her a coffin for a writing-desk and a skull for an inkstand."

"Oh," cried Vincent, "I remember some lines so applicable to your remark that I must forthwith interrupt you, in order to introduce them. Madame de Staël said, in one of her works, that melancholy was a source of perfection. Listen now to my author,—

"'Une femme nous dit, et nous prouve en effet,
Qu'avant quelques mille ans l'homme sera parfait,
Qu'il devra cet état à la *mélancolie.*
On *sait que la tristesse annonce le génie;*
Nous avons déjà fait des progrès étonnants;
Que de tristes écrits! que de tristes romans!
Des plus noires horreurs nous sommes idolâtres,
Et la mélancolie a gagné nos théâtres.'"[1]

"What!" cried I, "are you so well acquainted with my favourite book?"

"Yours?" exclaimed Vincent. "Gods, what a sympathy;[2] it has long been my most familiar acquaintance; but—

"'Tell us what hath chanced to-day,
That Cæsar looks so sad?'"

My eye followed Vincent's to ascertain the meaning of this question, and rested upon Glanville, who had that moment entered the room. I might have known that he was expected by Lady Roseville's abstraction, the restlessness with which she started at times from her seat, and as instantly resumed it; and the fond, expecting looks towards the door, every

[1] "A woman tells us, and in fact she proves,
That Man, though slowly, to perfection moves;
But to be perfect, first we must be sad;
Genius, we know, is melancholy mad.
Already Time our startling progress hails!
What cheerless essays! what disastrous tales!
Horror has grown the amusement of the age,
And Mirth despairing yawns, and flies the stage."

[2] "La Gastronomie," Poëme, par J. Berchoux.

time it shut or opened, which denote so strongly the absent and dreaming heart of the woman who loves.

Glanville seemed paler than usual, and perhaps even sadder; but he was less *distrait* and abstracted; no sooner did he see, than he approached me, and extended his hand with great cordiality. "*His* hand!" thought I, and I could not bring myself to accept it; I merely addressed him in the commonplace salutation. He looked hard and inquisitively at me, and then turned abruptly away. Lady Roseville had risen from her chair; her eyes followed him. He had thrown himself on a settee near the window. She went up to him, and sat herself by his side. I turned; my face burned; my heart beat; I was now next to Ellen Glanville: she was looking down, apparently employed with some engravings, but I thought her hand trembled.

There was a pause. Vincent was talking with the other occupiers of the table: a woman, at such times, is always the first to speak. "We have not seen you, Mr. Pelham," said Ellen, "since your return to town."

"I have been very ill," I answered, and I felt my voice falter. Ellen looked up anxiously at my face; I could not brook those large, deep, tender eyes, and it now became my turn to occupy myself with the prints.

"You *do* look pale," she said in a low voice. I did not trust myself with a further remark: dissimulator as I was to others, I was like a guilty child before the woman I loved. There was another pause; at last Ellen said, "How do you think my brother looks?"

I started; yes, he *was* her brother, and I was once more myself at that thought. I answered so coldly, and almost haughtily, that Ellen coloured, and said with some dignity that she should join Lady Roseville. I bowed slightly, and she withdrew to the countess. I seized my hat and departed, —but not utterly alone: I had managed to secrete the book which Ellen's hand had marked; through many a bitter day and sleepless night that book has been my only companion: I have it before me now; and it is open at a page which is yet blistered with the traces of former tears!

CHAPTER LXVIII.

Our mistress is a little given to philosophy: what disputations shall we have here by and by! — *Gil Blas.*

It was now but seldom that I met Ellen; for I went little into general society, and grew every day more engrossed in political affairs. Sometimes, however, when, wearied of myself and my graver occupations, I yielded to my mother's solicitations, and went to one of the nightly haunts of the goddess *we* term *Pleasure*, and the Greeks *Moria*, the game of dissipation (to use a Spanish proverb) shuffled us together. It was then that I had the most difficult task of my life to learn and to perform; to check the lip, the eye, the soul, — to heap curb on curb upon the gushings of the heart, which daily and hourly yearned to overflow; and to feel that, while the mighty and restless tides of passion were thus fettered and restrained, all within was a parched and arid wilderness, that wasted itself, for want of very moisture, away. Yet there was something grateful in the sadness with which I watched her form in the dance, or listened to her voice in the song; and I felt soothed, and even happy, when my fancy flattered itself that her step never now seemed so light as it was wont to be when in harmony with mine, nor the songs that pleased her most so gay as those that were formerly her choice.

Distant and unobserved, I loved to feed my eyes upon her pale and downcast cheek; to note the abstraction that came over her at moments, even when her glance seemed brightest, and her lip most fluent; and to know that, while a fearful mystery might forever forbid the union of our hands, there was an invisible but electric chain which connected the sympathies of our hearts.

Ah! why is it, that the noblest of our passions should be also the most selfish? that while we would make all earthly

sacrifice for the one we love, we are perpetually demanding a sacrifice in return; that if we cannot have the rapture of blessing, we find a consolation in the power to afflict; and that we acknowledge, while we reprobate, the maxim of the sage: "L'on veut faire tout le bonheur, ou, si cela ne se peut ainsi, tout le malheur, de ce qu'on aime."[1]

The beauty of Ellen was not of that nature which rests solely upon the freshness of youth, nor even the magic of expression: it was as faultless as it was dazzling; no one could deny its excess or its perfection; her praises came constantly to my ear into whatever society I went. Say what we will of the power of love, it borrows greatly from opinion: pride, above all things, sanctions and strengthens affection. When all voices were united to panegyrize her beauty; when I knew that the powers of her wit,—the charms of her conversation,—the accurate judgment, united to the sparkling imagination, were even more remarkable characteristics of her *mind*, than the loveliness of her *person*, I could not but feel my ambition, as well as my tenderness, excited: I dwelt with a double intensity on my choice, and with a tenfold bitterness on the obstacle which forbade me to indulge it.

Yet there was one circumstance, to which, in spite of all the evidence against Reginald, my mind still fondly and eagerly clung. In searching the pockets of the unfortunate Tyrrell, the money he had mentioned to me as being in his possession could not be discovered. Had Glanville been the murderer, at all events he could not have been the robber. It was true that in the death-scuffle, which in all probability took place, the money might have fallen from the person of the deceased, either among the long grass which grew rankly and luxuriantly around, or in the sullen and slimy pool, close to which the murder was perpetrated; it was also possible that Thornton, knowing that the deceased had so large a sum about him, and not being aware that the circumstance had been communicated to me, or any one else, might not have been able, when he and Dawson first went to the spot, to re-

[1] "One wishes to make all the happiness, or, if that is forbidden, all the unhappiness of the being we love."

sist so great a temptation. However, there was a slight crevice in this fact for a sunbeam of hope to enter, and I was too sanguine, by habitual temperament and present passion, not to turn towards it from the general darkness of my thoughts.

With Glanville I was often brought into immediate contact. Both united in the same party, and engaged in concerting the same measures, we frequently met in public, and sometimes even alone. However, I was invariably cold and distant, and Glanville confirmed rather than diminished my suspicions, by making no commentary on my behavior and imitating it in the indifference of his own. Yet it was with a painful and aching heart that I marked in his emaciated form and sunken cheek the gradual but certain progress of disease and death; and while all England rang with the renown of the young but almost unrivalled orator, and both parties united in anticipating the certainty and brilliancy of his success, I felt how improbable it was that, even if his crime escaped the unceasing vigilance of justice, this living world would long possess any traces of his genius but the remembrance of his name. There was something in his love of letters, his habits of luxury and expense, the energy of his mind,—the solitude, the darkness, the *hauteur*, the reserve of his manners and life,—which reminded me of the German Wallenstein; nor was he altogether without the superstition of that evil but extraordinary man. It is true that he was not addicted to the romantic fables of astrology, but he was an earnest though secret advocate of the world of spirits. He did not utterly disbelieve the various stories of their return to earth and their visits to the living; and it would have been astonishing to me, had I been a less diligent observer of human inconsistencies, to mark a mind, otherwise so reasoning and strong, in this respect so credulous and weak; and to witness its reception of a belief, not only so adverse to ordinary reflection, but so absolutely contradictory to the philosophy it passionately cultivated and the principles it obstinately espoused.

One evening, I, Vincent, and Clarendon were alone at Lady Roseville's, when Reginald and his sister entered. I rose to depart: the beautiful countess would not suffer it; and when

I looked at Ellen, and saw her blush at my glance, the weakness of my heart conquered, and I remained.

Our conversation turned partly upon books, and principally on the science *du cœur et du monde,* for Lady Roseville was *un peu philosophe,* as well as more than *un peu littéraire;* and her house, like those of the Du Deffands and D'Epinays of the old French *régime,* was one where serious subjects were cultivated, as well as the lighter ones: where it was the mode to treat no less upon *things* than to scandalize *persons;* and where maxims on men and reflections on manners were as much in their places as strictures on the Opera and invitations to balls.

All who were now assembled were more or less suited to one another; all were people of the world, and yet occasional students of the closet; but all had a different method of expressing their learning or their observations. Clarendon was dry, formal, shrewd, and possessed of the suspicious philosophy common to men hackneyed in the world. Vincent relieved his learning by the quotation or metaphor, or originality of some sort, with which it was expressed. Lady Roseville seldom spoke much, but when she did, it was rather with grace than solidity. She was naturally melancholy and pensive, and her observations partook of the colourings of her mind; but she was also a *dame de la cour,* accustomed to conceal, and her language was gay and trifling, while the sentiments it clothed were pensive and sad.

Ellen Glanville was an attentive listener, but a diffident speaker. Though her knowledge was even masculine for its variety and extent, she was averse from displaying it; the childish, the lively, the tender, were the outward traits of her character,—the flowers were above, but the mine was beneath; one noted the beauty of the first,—one seldom dreamt of the value of the last.

Glanville's favourite method of expressing himself was terse and sententious. He did not love the labour of detail; he conveyed the knowledge of years in an axiom. Sometimes he was fanciful, sometimes false: but generally dark, melancholy, and bitter.

As for me, I entered more into conversation at Lady Roseville's than I usually do elsewhere; being according to my favourite philosophy, gay on the serious, and serious on the gay; and perhaps this is a juster method of treating the two than would be readily imagined: for things which are usually treated with importance are for the most part deserving of ridicule; and those which we receive as trifles swell themselves into a consequence we little dreamt of before they depart.

Vincent took up a volume: it was Shelley's "Posthumous Poems." "How fine," said he, "some of these are; but they are fine fragments of an architecture in bad taste: they are imperfect in themselves, and faulty in the school they belonged to; yet, such as they are, the master hand is evident upon them. They are like the pictures of Paul Veronese,—often offending the eye, often irritating the judgment, but breathing of something vast and lofty,—their very faults are majestic: this age, perhaps no other, will ever do them justice; but the disciples of future schools will make glorious pillage of their remains. The writings of Shelley would furnish matter for a hundred volumes: they are an admirable museum of ill-arranged curiosities,—they are diamonds awkwardly set; but one of them in the hands of a skilful jeweller would be inestimable; and the poet of the future will serve him as Mercury did the tortoise in his own translation from Homer,—make him 'sing sweetly when he's dead!' Their lyres will be made out of his *shell*."

"If I judge rightly," said Clarendon, "his literary faults were these: he was too learned in his poetry, and too poetical in his learning. Learning is the bane of the poet. Imagine how beautiful Petrarch would be without his platonic conceits; fancy the luxuriant imagination of Cowley left to run wild among the lofty objects of Nature, not the minute peculiarities of art. Even Milton, who made a more graceful and gorgeous use of learning than, perhaps, any other poet, would have been far more popular if he had been more familiar. Poetry is for the multitude; erudition for the few. In proportion as you mix them, erudition will gain in readers, and poetry lose."

"True," said Glanville; "and thus the poetical among philosophers are the most popular of their time; and the philosophical among poets the least popular of theirs."

"Take care," said Vincent, smiling, "that we are not misled by the *point* of your deduction: the remark is true, but with a certain reservation; namely, that the philosophy which renders a poet less popular, must be the philosophy of *learning*, not of *wisdom*. Wherever it consists in the knowledge of the *plainer* springs of the heart, and not in *abstruse* inquiry into its metaphysical and hidden subtleties, it necessarily increases the popularity of the poem; because, instead of being limited to the few, it comes home to every one. Thus, it is the philosophy of Shakspeare which puts him into every one's hands and hearts; while that of Lucretius, wonderful poet as he is, makes us often throw down the book because it fatigues us with the scholar. Philosophy, therefore, only sins in poetry, when, in the severe garb of learning, it becomes 'harsh and crabbed,' and *not* 'musical as is Apollo's lute.'"

"Alas!" said I, "how much more difficult than of yore education is become: formerly it had only one object,—to acquire learning; and now we have not only to acquire it, but to know what to do with it when we have,—nay, there are not a few cases where the very perfection of learning will be to *appear* ignorant."

"Perhaps," said Glanville, "the very perfection of *wisdom* may consist in *retaining* actual ignorance. Where was there ever the individual who, after consuming years, life, health, in the pursuit of science, rested satisfied with its success or rewarded by its triumph! Common-sense tells us that the best method of employing life is to *enjoy* it. Common-sense tells us also the ordinary means of this enjoyment; health, competence, and the indulgence, but the *moderate* indulgence, of our passions. What have these to do with science?"

"I might tell you," replied Vincent, "that I myself have been no idle nor inattentive seeker after the hidden treasures of mind; and that, from my own experience, I could speak of pleasure, pride, complacency, in the pursuit, that were no

inconsiderable augmenters of my stock of enjoyment; but I have the candour to confess, also, that I have known disappointment, mortification, despondency of mind and infirmity of body, that did more than balance the account. The fact is, in my opinion, that the individual is a sufferer for his toils, but then the mass is benefited by his success. It is we who reap, in idle gratification, what the husbandman has sown in the bitterness of labour. Genius did not save Milton from poverty and blindness, nor Tasso from the mad-house, nor Galileo from the Inquisition: *they* were the sufferers, but posterity the gainers. The literary empire reverses the political: it is not the many made for one; it is the one made for many. Wisdom and genius must have their martyrs as well as religion, and with the same results; namely, 'semen ecclesiæ est sanguis martyrorum.' And this reflection must console us for their misfortunes, for perhaps it was sufficient to console *them*. In the midst of the most affecting passage in the most wonderful work perhaps ever produced, for the mixture of universal thought with individual interest,—I mean the last two cantos of 'Childe Harold,'—the poet warms from himself at his hopes of being remembered

"'In his line
With his land's language.'

And who can read the noble and heart-speaking apology of Algernon Sydney without entering into his consolation no less than his misfortunes? Speaking of the law being turned into a snare instead of a protection, and instancing its uncertainty and danger in the times of Richard the Second, he says, 'God only knows what will be the issue of the like practices in these our days; perhaps He will in His mercy speedily visit His afflicted people; *I die in the faith that He will do it, though I know not the time or ways.*'"

"I love," said Clarendon, "the enthusiasm which places comfort in so noble a source; but is vanity, think you, a less powerful agent than philanthropy? Is it not the desire of shining before men that prompts us to whatever may effect it? and if it can *create*, can it not also *support?* I mean, that

if you allow that to shine, to dazzle, to enjoy praise, is no ordinary incentive to the commencement of great works, the conviction of future success for this desire becomes no inconsiderable reward. Grant, for instance, that this desire produced the 'Paradise Lost,' and you will not deny that it might also support the poet through his misfortunes. Do you think that he thought rather of the pleasure *his* work should afford to posterity, than of the praises *posterity* should extend to his work? Had not Cicero left us such frank confessions of himself, how patriotic, how philanthropic we should have esteemed him! *Now* we know both his motive and meed was vanity, may we not extend the knowledge of human nature which we have gained in this instance by applying it to others? For my part, I should be loth to inquire how large a quantum of vanity mingled with the haughty patriotism of Sydney or the unconquered soul of Cato."

Glanville bowed his head in approval.

"But," observed I, ironically, "why be so uncharitable to this poor and persecuted principle, since none of you deny the good and great actions it effects; why stigmatize vanity as a vice when it creates, or at least participates in, so many virtues? I wonder the ancients did not erect the choicest of their temples to its worship! As for me I shall henceforth only speak of it as the *primum mobile* of whatever we venerate and admire, and shall think it the highest compliment I can pay to a man, to tell him *he is eminently vain!*"

"I incline to your opinion," cried Vincent, laughing. "The reason we dislike vanity in others is because it is perpetually hurting our own. Of all passions (if for the moment I may call it such) it is the most indiscreet; it is forever blabbing out its own secrets. If it would but keep its counsel, it would be as graciously received in society as any other well-dressed and well-bred intruder of quality. Its garrulity makes it despised. But in truth it must be clear that vanity in itself is neither a vice nor a virtue, any more than this knife, in itself, is dangerous or useful; the person who employs gives it its qualities: thus, for instance, a great mind desires to shine, *or is vain*, in great actions; a frivolous one in frivolities; and

so on through the varieties of the human intellect. But I cannot agree with Mr. Clarendon that my admiration of Algernon Sydney (Cato I never *did* admire) would be at all lessened by the discovery that his resistance to tyranny in a great measure originated in vanity, or that the same vanity consoled him when he fell a victim to that resistance; for what does it prove but this, that, among the various feelings of his soul, indignation at oppression (so common to all men),—enthusiasm for liberty (so predominant in him),—the love of benefiting others,—the noble pride of being, in death, consistent with himself; among all these feelings, among a crowd of others equally honourable and pure,—there was also one, and perhaps no inconsiderable feeling, of desire that his life and death should be hereafter appreciated justly? Contempt of fame is the contempt of virtue. Never consider that vanity an offence which limits itself to wishing for the praise of good men for good actions: 'next to our own esteem,' says the best of the Roman philosophers, 'it is a virtue to desire the esteem of others.'"

"By your emphasis on the word *esteem*," said Lady Roseville, "I suppose you attach some peculiar importance to the word?"

"I do," answered Vincent. "I use it in contradistinction to *admiration*. We may covet general admiration for a *bad* action (for many bad actions have the *clinquant* which passes for real gold), but one can expect general *esteem* only for a *good* one."

"From this distinction," said Ellen, modestly, "may we not draw an inference which will greatly help us in our consideration of vanity? May we not deem that vanity which desires only the *esteem* of others to be invariably a virtue, and that which only longs for *admiration* to be frequently a vice?"

"We *may* admit your inference," said Vincent; "and before I leave this question, I cannot help remarking upon the folly of the superficial, who imagine, by studying human motives, that philosophers wish to depreciate human actions. To direct our admiration to a proper point is surely not to destroy it; yet how angry inconsiderate enthusiasts are, when

we assign real in the place of exaggerated feelings. Thus the advocates for the doctrine of utility — the most benevolent, because the most indulgent of all philosophies — are branded with the epithets of selfish and interested, — decriers of moral excellence, and disbelievers in generous actions. Vice has no friend like the prejudices which call themselves virtue. 'Le prétexte ordinaire de ceux qui font le malheur des autres est qu'ils veulent leur bien.'"[1]

My eyes were accidentally fixed on Glanville as Vincent ceased; he looked up, and coloured faintly as he met my look, but he did not withdraw his own, — keenly and steadily we gazed upon each other, till Ellen, turning round suddenly, remarked the unwonted meaning of our looks, and placed her hand in her brother's with a sort of fear.

It was late; he rose to withdraw, and passing me said in a low tone, "A little while and you shall know all." I made no answer; he left the room with Ellen.

"Lady Roseville has had but a dull evening, I fear, with our stupid saws and *ancient* instances," said Vincent. The eyes of the person he addressed were fixed upon the door. I was standing close by her, and, as the words struck her ear, she turned abruptly; a tear fell upon my hand; she perceived it, and though I *would not* look upon her *face*, I saw that her very *neck* blushed: but she, like me, if she gave way to feeling, had learned too deep a lesson from the world not readily to resume her self-command; she answered Vincent railingly, upon his bad compliment to us, and received our adieus with all her customary grace and more than her customary gayety.

[1] "The ordinary pretext of those who make the misery of others is, that they wish their good."

CHAPTER LXIX.

Ah! sir, had I but bestowed half the pains in learning a trade, that I have in learning to be a scoundrel, I might have been a rich man at this day; but, rogue as I am, still I may be your friend, and that, perhaps, when you least expect it. — *Vicar of Wakefield.*

What with the anxiety and uncertainty of my political prospects, the continued whirlpool in which I lived, and, above all, the unpropitious state of my *belle passion*, my health gave way; my appetite forsook me; my sleep failed me; I lost my good looks, and my mother declared that I should have no chance with an heiress: all these circumstances together were not without their weight. So I set out one morning to Hampton Court, for the benefit of the country air.

It is by no means an unpleasant thing to turn one's back upon the great city in the height of its festivities. Misanthropy is a charming feeling for a short time, and one inhales the country, and animadverts on the town, with the most melancholy satisfaction in the world. I sat myself down at a pretty little cottage, a mile out of the town. From the window of my drawing-room I revelled in the luxurious contemplation of three pigs, one cow, and a straw-yard; and I could get to the Thames, in a walk of five minutes, by a short cut through a lime-kiln. Such pleasing opportunities of enjoying the beauties of Nature are not often to be met with: you may be sure, therefore, that I made the most of them. I rose early, walked before breakfast for my health, and came back with a most satisfactory headache for my pains. I read for just three hours, walked for two more, thought over Abernethy, dyspepsia, and blue pills, till dinner; and absolutely forgot Lord Dawton, ambition, Guloseton, epicurism, — ay, all but — of course, reader, you know whom I am about to except — the ladye of my love.

One bright, laughing day, I threw down my book an hour sooner than usual, and sallied out with a lightness of foot and exhilaration of spirit to which I had long been a stranger. I had just sprung over a stile that led into one of those green shady lanes which make us feel that the old poets, who loved and lived for Nature, were right in calling our island "the merry England,"—when I was startled by a short, quick bark, on one side of the hedge. I turned sharply round; and seated upon the sward, was a man, apparently of the pedler profession; a large deal box was lying open before him; a few articles of linen and female dress were scattered round, and the man himself appeared earnestly occupied in examining the deeper recesses of his itinerant warehouse. A small black terrier flew towards me with no friendly growl. "Down," said I: "all strangers are not foes; though the English generally think so."

The man hastily looked up; perhaps he was struck with the quaintness of my remonstrance to his canine companion; for touching his hat civilly, he said: "The dog, sir, is very quiet; he only means to give *me* the alarm by giving it to *you*; for dogs seem to have no despicable insight into human nature, and know well that the best of us may be taken by surprise."

"You are a moralist," said I, not a little astonished in my turn by such an address from such a person. "I could not have expected to stumble upon a philosopher so easily. Have you any wares in your box likely to suit me? If so, I should like to purchase of so moralizing a vendor!"

"No, sir," said the seeming pedler, smiling, and yet at the same time hurrying his goods into his box, and carefully turning the key,—"no, sir, I am only a bearer of other men's goods; my morals are all that I can call my own, and these I will sell you at your own price."

"You are candid, my friend," said I, "and your frankness alone would be inestimable in this age of deceit and country of hypocrisy."

"Ah, sir," said my new acquaintance, "I see already that you are one of those persons who look to the dark side of

things; for my part, I think the present age the best that ever existed, and our own country the most virtuous in Europe."

"I congratulate you, Mr. Optimist, on your opinions," quoth I; "but your observation leads me to suppose that you are both an historian and a traveller: am I right?"

"Why," answered the box-bearer, "I *have* dabbled a little in books, and wandered *not* a little among men. I am just returned from Germany, and am now going to my friends in London. I am charged with this box of goods: Heaven send me the luck to deliver it safe."

"Amen," said I; "and with that prayer and this trifle, I wish you a good morning."

"Thank you a thousand times, sir, for both," replied the man—"but do add to your favours by informing me of the right road to the town of ——."

"I am going in that direction myself: if you choose to accompany me part of the way I can insure your not missing the rest."

"Your honour is too good!" returned he of the box, rising and slinging his fardel across him; "it is but seldom that a gentleman of your rank will condescend to walk three paces with *one* of mine. You smile, sir: perhaps you think I should not class myself among gentlemen; and yet I have as good a right to the name as most of the set. I belong to no trade,—I follow no calling; I rove where I list, and rest where I please: in short I know no occupation but my indolence, and no law but my will. Now, sir, may I not call myself a gentleman?"

"Of a surety!" quoth I. "You seem to me to hold a middle rank between a half-pay captain and the king of the gypsies."

"You have hit it, sir," rejoined my companion, with a slight laugh. He was now by my side, and, as we walked on, I had leisure more minutely to examine him. He was a middle-sized and rather athletic man, apparently about the age of thirty-eight. He was attired in a dark-blue frock-coat, which was neither shabby nor new, but ill-made, and much too large

and long for its present possessor; beneath this was a faded velvet waistcoat, that had formerly, like the Persian ambassador's tunic, "blushed with crimson and blazed with gold," but which might now have been advantageously exchanged in Monmouth Street for the lawful sum of two shillings and ninepence; under this was an inner vest of the cashmere shawl pattern, which seemed much too new for the rest of the dress. Though his shirt was of a very unwashed hue, I remarked with some suspicion that it was of a very respectable fineness; and a pin, which might be paste, or could be diamond, peeped below a tattered and dingy black kid stock, like a gypsy's eye beneath her hair.

His trousers were of a light gray, and the justice of Providence, or of the tailor, avenged itself upon them, for the prodigal length bestowed upon their ill-assorted companion, the coat; for they were much too tight for the muscular limbs they concealed, and, rising far above the ankle, exhibited the whole of a thick Wellington boot, which was the very picture of Italy upon the map.

The face of the man was commonplace and ordinary; one sees a hundred such every day in Fleet Street or on the 'Change; the features were small, irregular, and somewhat flat: yet when you looked twice upon the countenance, there was something marked and singular in the expression, which fully atoned for the commonness of the features. The right eye turned away from the left, in that watchful squint which seems constructed on the same considerate plan as those Irish guns made for shooting round a corner; his eyebrows were large and shaggy, and greatly resembled bramble-bushes, in which his fox-like eyes had taken refuge. Round these vulpine retreats was a labyrinthean maze of those wrinkles, vulgarly called crow's-feet; deep, intricate, and intersected, they seemed for all the world like a web of a Chancery suit. Singularly enough, the rest of the countenance was perfectly smooth and unindented; even the lines from the nostril to the corners of the mouth, usually so deeply traced in men of his age, were scarcely more apparent than in a boy of eighteen.

His smile was frank, his voice clear and hearty, his address open, and much superior to his apparent rank of life, claiming somewhat of equality, yet conceding a great deal of respect; but, notwithstanding all these certainly favourable points, there was a sly and cunning expression in his perverse and vigilant eye and all the wrinkled demesnes in its vicinity that made me mistrust even while I liked my companion; perhaps, indeed, he was too frank, too familiar, too *dégagé*, to be quite natural. Your honest men may soon buy reserve by experience. Rogues are communicative and open, because confidence and openness cost them nothing. To finish the description of my new acquaintance, I should observe that there was something in his countenance which struck me as not wholly unfamiliar; it was one of those which we have not, in all human probability, seen before, and yet which (perhaps from their very commonness) we imagine we have encountered a hundred times.

We walked on briskly, notwithstanding the warmth of the day; in fact, the air was so pure, the grass so green, the laughing noonday so full of the hum, the motion, and the life of creation, that the feeling produced was rather that of freshness and vigoration than of languor and heat.

"We have a beautiful country, sir," said my hero of the box. "It is like walking through a garden after the more sterile and sullen features of the Continent. A pure mind, sir, loves the country; for my part, I am always disposed to burst out in thanksgiving to Providence when I behold its works, and like the valleys in the psalm, I am ready to laugh and sing."

"An enthusiast," said I, "as well as a philosopher! perhaps (and I believe it likely) I have the honour of addressing a poet also."

"Why, sir," replied the man, "I have made verses in my life; in short there is little I have not done, for I was always a lover of variety; but, perhaps, your honour will let me return the suspicion. Are *you* not a favourite of the muse?"

"I cannot say that I am," said I. "I value myself only on

my common-sense,—the very antipodes to genius, you know, according to the orthodox belief."

"Common-sense!" repeated my companion, with a singular and meaning smile, and a twinkle with his left eye. "Common-sense! Ah, that is not my *forte*, sir. You, I dare say, are one of those gentlemen whom it is very difficult to take in, either passively or actively, by appearance or in act. For my part, I have been a dupe all my life,—a child might cheat me! I am the most unsuspicious person in the world."

"Too candid by half," thought I. "The man is certainly a rascal; but what is that to me? I shall never see him again;" and, true to my love of never losing sight of an opportunity of ascertaining individual character, I observed that I thought such an acquaintance very valuable, especially if he were in trade; it was a pity, therefore, for my sake, that my companion had informed me that he followed no calling.

"Why, sir," said he, "I *am* occasionally in employment; my nominal profession is that of a broker. I buy shawls and handkerchiefs of poor countesses, and retail them to rich plebeians. I fit up new-married couples with linen, at a more moderate rate than the shops, and procure the bridegroom his present of jewels at forty per cent less than the jewellers; nay, I am as friendly to an intrigue as a marriage; and when I cannot sell my jewels, I will my good offices. A gentleman so handsome as your honour may have an affair upon your hands: if so, you may rely upon my secrecy and zeal. In short, I am an innocent, good-natured fellow, who does harm to no one for nothing, and good to every one for something."

"I admire your code," quoth I, "and whenever I want a mediator between Venus and myself, I will employ you. Have you always followed your present idle profession, or were you brought up to any other?"

"I was intended for a silversmith," answered my friend, "but Providence willed it otherwise: they taught me from childhood to repeat the Lord's Prayer; Heaven heard me, and delivered me from temptation; there is, indeed, something terribly seducing in the face of a silver spoon!"

"Well," said I, "you are the honestest knave I ever met, and one would trust you with one's purse for the ingenuousness with which you own you would steal it. Pray, think you it is probable that I have ever had the happiness to meet you before? I cannot help fancying so; yet as I have never been in the watch-house or the Old Bailey, my reason tells me that I must be mistaken."

"Not at all, sir," returned my worthy: "I remember you well, for I never saw a face like yours that I did *not* remember. I had the honour of sipping some British liquors in the same room with yourself one evening; you were then in company with my friend Mr. Gordon."

"Ha!" said I, "I thank you for the hint. I now remember well, by the same token, he told me that you were the most ingenious gentleman in England; and that you had a happy propensity of mistaking other people's possessions for your own. I congratulate myself upon so desirable an acquaintance."

My friend, who was indeed no other than Mr. Job Jonson, smiled with his usual blandness, and made me a low bow of acknowledgment before he resumed, —

"No doubt, sir, Mr. Gordon informed you right. I flatter myself few gentlemen understand better than myself the art of *appropriation;* though I say it who should not say it, I deserve the reputation I have acquired. Sir, I have always had ill-fortune to struggle against, and have always remedied it by two virtues, — perseverance and ingenuity. To give you an idea of my ill-fortune, know that I have been taken up twenty-three times on suspicion; of my perseverance, know that twenty-three times I have been taken up *justly;* and of my ingenuity, know that I have been twenty-three times let off, because there was not a tittle of legal evidence against me!"

"I venerate your talents, Mr. Jonson," replied I, "if by the name of Jonson it pleaseth you to be called, although, like the heathen deities, I presume that you have many titles whereof some are more grateful to your ears than others."

"Nay," answered the man of two virtues, "I am never ashamed of my name; indeed, I have never done anything to

disgrace me. I have never indulged in low company nor profligate debauchery; whatever I have executed by way of profession has been done in a superior and artist-like manner; not in the rude bungling fashion of other adventurers. Moreover, I have always had a taste for polite literature, and went once as an apprentice to a publishing bookseller, for the sole purpose of reading the new works before they came out. In fine, I have never neglected any opportunity of improving my mind; and the worst that can be said against me is, that I have remembered my catechism, and taken all possible pains 'to learn and labour truly, to get my living and do my duty in that state of life to which it has pleased Providence to call me.'"

"I have often heard," answered I, "that there is *honour* among thieves; I am happy to learn from you, that there is also religion: your baptismal sponsors must be proud of so diligent a godson."

"They ought to be, sir," replied Mr. Jonson, "for I gave *them* the first specimens of my address: the story is long, but if you ever give me an opportunity, I will relate it."

"Thank you," said I; "meanwhile I must wish you a good morning; your road now lies to the right. I return you my best thanks for your condescension in accompanying so undistinguished an individual as myself."

"Oh, never mention it, your honour," rejoined Mr. Jonson. "I am always too happy to walk with a gentleman of your 'common-sense.' Farewell, sir; may we meet again!"

So saying, Mr. Jonson struck into his new road, and we parted.[1]

I went home, musing on my adventure and delighted with my adventurer. When I was about three paces from the door of my home, I was accosted in a most pitiful tone by a poor old beggar, apparently in the last extreme of misery and disease. Notwithstanding my political economy, I was moved into almsgiving by a spectacle so wretched. I put my hand into my pocket,—my purse was gone; and, on searching the

[1] If any one should think this sketch from nature exaggerated, I refer him to the "Memoirs of James Hardy Vaux."

other, lo — my handkerchief, my pocket-book, and a gold locket, which had belonged to Madame d'Anville, had vanished too.

One does not keep company with men of two virtues and receive compliments upon one's common-sense for nothing!

The beggar still continued to importune me.

"Give him some food and half a crown," said I to my landlady. Two hours afterwards, she came up to me, — "Oh, sir, my silver teapot, — *that villain the beggar!*"

A light flashed upon me, — "Ah, Mr. Job Jonson! Mr. Job Jonson!" cried I, in an indescribable rage. "Out of my sight, woman! out of my sight!" I stopped short; my speech failed me. Never tell me that shame is the companion of guilt: the sinful knave is never so ashamed of himself as is the innocent fool who suffers by him.

CHAPTER LXX.

> THEN must I plunge again into the crowd,
> And follow all that peace disdains to seek. — BYRON.

IN the quiet of my retreat I remained for eight days, during which time I never looked once at a newspaper: imagine how great was my philosophy! On the ninth, I began to think it high time for me to hear from Dawton; and finding that I had eaten two rolls for breakfast, and that certain untimely wrinkles began to assume a more mitigated appearance, I bethought me once more of the "Beauties of Babylon."

While I was in this kindly mood towards the great city and its inhabitants, my landlady put two letters in my hand, — one was from my mother, the other from Guloseton. I opened the latter first; it ran thus: —

DEAR PELHAM, — I was very sorry to hear you had left town, — and so unexpectedly too. I obtained your address at Mivart's, and hasten to avail myself of it. Pray come to town immediately. I have received

some *chevreuil* as a present, and long for your opinion; it is too nice to keep: for all things nice were made but to grow bad when nicest; as Moore, I believe, says of flowers, substituting sweet and fleetest for bad and nicest; so, you see, you must come without loss of time.

But *you*, my friend, — how *can* you possibly have been spending your time? I was kept awake all last night by thinking what you *could* have for dinner. Fish is out of the question in the country; chickens die of the pip everywhere but in London; game is out of season; it is impossible to send to Giblett's for meat; it is equally impossible to get it anywhere else; and as for the only two natural productions of the country, vegetables and eggs, I need no extraordinary penetration to be certain that your cook cannot *transmute* the latter into an *omelette aux huîtres*, nor the former into *légumes à la crême*.

Thus you see, by a series of undeniable demonstrations, you *must* absolutely be in a state of starvation. At this thought the tears rush into my eyes: for Heaven's sake, for my sake, for your own sake, but *above all*, for the sake of the *chevreuil*, hasten to London. I figure you to myself in the last stage of atrophy, — airy as a trifle, thin as the ghost of a greyhound.

I need say no more on the subject. I may rely on your own discretion to procure me the immediate pleasure of your company. Indeed, were I to dwell longer on your melancholy situation my feelings would overcome me. — *Mais revenons à nos moutons* (a most pertinent phrase, by the by, — oh, the French excel us in everything, from the paramount science of cookery to the little art of conversation).

You must tell me your candid, your unbiased, your deliberate opinion of *chevreuil*. For my part, I should not wonder at the mythology of the northern heathen nations, which places hunting among the chief enjoyments of their heaven, were *chevreuil* the object of their chase; but *nihil est omni parte beatum;* — it wants *fat*, my dear Pelham, it wants fat: nor do I see how to remedy this defect; for were we by art to supply the *fat*, we should deprive ourselves of the *flavour* bestowed by Nature; and this, my dear Pelham, was always my great argument for liberty. Cooped, chained, and confined in cities and slavery, all things lose the fresh and *generous tastes* which it is the peculiar blessing of freedom and the country to afford.

Tell me, my friend, what has been the late subject of your reflections. *My* thoughts have dwelt, much and seriously, on the *terra incognita*, the undiscovered tracts in the *pays culinaire*, which the profoundest investigators have left untouched and unexplored in — *veal*. But more of this hereafter: the lightness of a letter is ill suited to the depths of philosophical research.

Lord Dawton sounded me upon my votes yesterday. "A thousand pities too," said he, "that *you* never speak in the House of Lords." — "*Orator* fit," said I, "*orators are subject to apoplexy.*"

Adieu, my dear friend, for friend you are, if the philosopher was right in defining true friendship to consist in liking and disliking the same things. You hate parsnips *au naturel*, — so do I: you love *pâtés de foie gras, et moi aussi; nous voilà donc les meilleurs amis du monde!*

GULOSETON.

So much for my friend, thought I; and now for my mother, opening the maternal epistle, which I herewith transcribe: —

MY DEAR HENRY, — Lose no time in coming to town. Every day the ministers are filling up the minor places, and it requires a great stretch of recollection in a politician to remember the absent. Mr. V—— said yesterday, at a dinner-party where I was present, that Lord Dawton had promised him the borough of ——. Now you know, my dear Henry, that was the very borough he promised to you: you must see further into this. Lord Dawton is a good sort of man enough, but refused once to fight a duel; therefore, if he has disregarded his honour in one instance, he may do so in another; at all events, you have no time to lose.

The young Duke of —— gives a ball to-morrow evening: Mrs. —— pays all the expenses, and I know for a certainty that she will marry him in a week; this as yet is a secret. There will be a great mixture, but the ball will be worth going to. I have a card for you.

Lady Huffemall and I think that we shall not patronize the future duchess; but have not yet made up our minds. Lady Roseville, however, speaks of the intended match with great respect, and says that since we admit *convenance* as the chief rule in matrimony, she never remembers an instance in which it has been more consulted.

There are to be several promotions in the peerage. Lord ——'s friends wish to give out that he will have a dukedom; *mais j'en doute.* However, he has well deserved it; for he not only gives the best dinners in town, but the best account of them in the "Morning Post" afterwards; which I think is very properly upholding the dignity of our order.

I hope most earnestly that you do not (in your country retreat) neglect your health; nor, I may add, your mind; and that you take an opportunity every other day of practising waltzing, which you can very well

do with the help of an arm-chair. I would send you down (did I not expect you here so soon) Lord Mount E——'s "Musical Reminiscences;" not only because it is a very entertaining book, but because I wish you to pay much greater attention to music than you seem inclined to do. ——, who is never very refined in his *bons mots*, says that Lord M—— seems to have considered the world a concert, in which the best performer plays first fiddle. It is, indeed, quite delightful to see the veneration our musical friend has for the orchestra and its occupants. I wish to Heaven, my dear Henry, he could instil into you a little of his ardour. I am quite mortified at times by your ignorance of tunes and operas: nothing tells better in conversation than a knowledge of music, as you will one day or other discover.

God bless you, my dearest Henry. Fully expecting you, I have sent to engage your former rooms at Mivart's; do not let me be disappointed.

Yours, etc.

F. P.

I read the above letter twice over, and felt my cheek glow and my heart swell as I passed the passage relative to Lord Dawton and the borough. The new minister had certainly, for some weeks since, been playing a double part with me: it would long ago have been easy to procure me a subordinate situation,—still easier to place me in Parliament; yet he had contented himself with doubtful promises and idle civilities. What, however, seemed to me most unaccountable was his motive in breaking or paltering with his engagement: he knew that I had served him and his party better than half his corps; he professed, not only to me, but to society, the highest opinion of my abilities, knowledge, and application: he saw, consequently, how serviceable I could be as a friend; and, from the same qualities, joined to the rank of my birth and connections and the high and resentful temper of my mind, he might readily augur that I could be equally influential as a foe.

With this reflection, I stilled the beating of my heart and the fever of my pulse. I crushed the obnoxious letter in my hand, walked thrice up and down the room, paused at the bell, rang it violently, ordered post-horses instantly, and in less than an hour was on the road to London.

How different is the human mind according to the difference

of place! In our passions, as in our creeds, we are the mere dependants of geographical situation. Nay, the trifling variation of a single mile will revolutionize the whole tides and torrents of our hearts. The man who is meek, generous, benevolent, and kind, in the country, enters the scene of contest, and becomes forthwith fiery or mean, selfish or stern, just as if the virtues were only for solitude and the vices for the city. I have ill expressed the above reflection; *n'importe,*—so much the better shall I explain my feelings at the time I speak of; for I was then too eager and engrossed to attend to the niceties of words. On my arrival at Mivart's I scarcely allowed myself time to change my dress before I set out to Lord Dawton. "He shall afford me an explanation," I thought, "or a recompense, *or a revenge.*" I knocked at the door; the minister was out. "Give him this card," said I to the porter, "and say I shall call to-morrow at three."

I walked to Brookes's; there I met Mr. V——. My acquaintance with him was small; but he was a man of talent, and, what was more to my purpose, of open manners. I went up to him, and we entered into conversation. "Is it true," said I, "that I am to congratulate you upon the certainty of your return for Lord Dawton's borough of ——?"

"I believe so," replied V——. "Lord Dawton engaged it to me last week, and Mr. H——, the present member, has accepted the Chiltern Hundreds. You know all our family support Lord Dawton warmly in the present crisis, and my return for this borough was materially insisted upon. Such things are, you see, Mr. Pelham, even in these virtuous days of parliamentary purity."

"True," said I, dissembling my chagrin, "yourself and Dawton have made an admirable exchange. Think you the ministry can be said to be fairly seated?"

"By no means; everything depends upon the motion of ——, brought on next week. Dawton looks to that as to the decisive battle for this session."

Lord Gavelton now joined us, and I sauntered away with the utmost (seeming) indifference. At the top of St. James's Street, Lady Roseville's well-known carriage passed me; she

stopped for a moment. "We shall meet at the Duke of ——'s to-night," said she, "shall we not?"

"If *you* go — certainly," I replied.

I went home to my solitary apartment; and if I suffered somewhat of the torments of baffled hope and foiled ambition, the pang is not for the spectator. My lighter moments are for the world, — my deeper for myself: and, like the Spartan boy, I would keep, even in the pangs of death, a mantle over the teeth and fangs which were fastening upon my breast.

CHAPTER LXXI.

NOCET empta dolore voluptas. — OVID.

THE *first* person I saw at the Duke of ——'s was Mr. Mivart; he officiated as a gentleman usher: the *second* was my mother; she was, as usual, surrounded by men, "the shades of heroes that have been," remnants of a former day, when the feet of the young and fair Lady Frances were as light as her head, and she might have rivalled, in the science *de la danse*, even the graceful Duchess of B——d. Over the dandies of her own time she still preserved her ancient empire; and it was amusing enough to hear the address of the *ci-devant jeunes hommes*, who continued, through habit, the compliments begun thirty years since through admiration.

My mother was, indeed, what the world calls a very charming, agreeable woman. Few persons were more popular in society: her manners were perfection, — her smile enchantment: she lived, moved, breathed only for the world, and the world was not ungrateful for the constancy of her devotion. Yet, if her letters have given my readers any idea of her character, they will perceive that the very desire of supremacy in *ton* gave (Heaven forgive my filial impiety!) a sort of demi-vulgarism to her ideas; for they who live only for the

opinion of others always want that self-dignity which alone confers a high cast upon the sentiments; and the most really unexceptionable in mode are frequently the least genuinely patrician in mind.

I joined the maternal party, and Lady Frances soon took an opportunity of whispering, "You are looking very well, and very handsome; I declare you are *not* unlike me, especially about the eyes. I have just heard that Miss Glanville will be a great heiress, for poor Sir Reginald cannot live much longer. She is here to-night; pray do not lose the opportunity."

My cheek burned like fire at this speech; and my mother, quietly observing that I had a beautiful colour, and ought therefore *immediately* to find out Miss Glanville, lest it should vanish by the least delay, turned from me to speak of a public breakfast about shortly to be given. I passed into the dancing-room; there I found Vincent; he was in unusually good spirits.

"Well," said he, with a sneer, "you have not taken your seat yet. I suppose Lord Dawton's representative, whose place you are to supply, is like Theseus; 'sedet in æternumque sedebit.' A thousand pities you can't come in before next week; we shall then have fiery *motions* in the *Lower House*, as the astrologers say."

I smiled. "*Ah, mon cher!*" said I, "Sparta hath many a worthier son than me! Meanwhile, how get on the noble Lords Lesborough and Lincoln? 'Sure such a pair were never seen, so justly formed to meet by nature.'"

"Pooh!" said Vincent, coarsely, "they shall get *on* well enough before you get *in*. Look to yourself, and remember that 'Cæsar plays the ingrate.'"

Vincent turned away; my eyes were riveted on the ground; the beautiful Lady —— passed by me: "What, *you* in a revery!" said she, laughing; "our very host will turn thoughtful next!"

"Nay," said I, "in your absence would you have me glad? However, if Moore's mythology be true, Beauty loves Folly the better for borrowing something from Reason,—but come,

this is a place not for the grave, but the *giddy*. Let us join the waltzers."

"I am engaged."

"I know it! Do you think I would dance with any woman who was *not* engaged? There would be no triumph to one's vanity in that case. *Allons*, you *must* prefer me to an engagement;" and so saying I led off my prize.

Her intended partner was Mr. V——; just as we had joined the dancers, he spied us out, and approached with his long, serious, respectful face: the music struck *up*, and the next moment poor V—— was very nearly struck *down*. Fraught with the most political spite, I whirled up against him; apologized with my blandest smile, and left him wiping his mouth and rubbing his shoulder, the most forlorn picture of Hope in adversity that can possibly be conceived.

I soon grew weary of my partner, and, leaving her to her fate, rambled into another room. There, seated alone, was Lady Roseville. I placed myself beside her; there was a sort of freemasonry between her and myself; each knew something more of the other than the world did, and read his or her heart by other signs than words. I soon saw that she was in no mirthful mood: so much the better; she was the fitter companion for a baffled aspirant like me.

The room we were in was almost deserted, and, finding ourselves uninterrupted, the stream of our conversation flowed into sentiment.

"How little," said Lady Roseville, "can the crowd know of the individuals who compose it! As the most opposite colours may be blended into one, and so lose their individual hues, and be classed under a single name, so every one here will go home, and speak of the '*gay scene*,' without thinking for a moment how many breaking hearts may have composed it."

"I have often thought," said I, "how harsh we are in our judgments of others,—how often we accuse those persons of being worldly who merely seem so to the world. Who, for instance, that saw you in your brightest moments would ever suppose that you could make the confession you have just made?"

"I would *not* make such a confession to many beside yourself," answered Lady Roseville. "Nay, you need not thank me. I am some years older than you; I have lived longer in the world; I have seen much of its various characters; and my experience has taught me to penetrate and prize a character like yours. While you seem frivolous to the superficial, I know you to have a mind not only capable of the most solid and important affairs, but habituated by reflection to consider them. You appear effeminate, I know that none are more daring; indolent, none are more actively ambitious; utterly selfish, and I know that no earthly interest could bribe you into meanness or injustice,—no, nor even into a venial dereliction of principle. It is from this estimate of your character that I am frank and open to you. Besides, I recognize something in the careful pride with which you conceal your higher and deeper feelings, resembling the strongest actuating principle in my own mind. All this interests me warmly in your fate; may it be as bright as my presentiments forebode!"

I looked into the beautiful face of the speaker as she concluded: perhaps, at that solitary moment, my heart was unfaithful to Ellen; but the infidelity passed away like the breath from the mirror. Coxcomb as I was, I knew well how passionless was the interest expressed for me. Rover as I had been, I knew, also, how pure may be the friendship of a woman—*provided she loves another!*

I thanked Lady Roseville warmly for her opinion. "Perhaps," I added, "dared I solicit your advice, you would not find me wholly undeserving of your esteem."

"My advice," answered Lady Roseville, "would be, indeed, worse than useless, were it not regulated by a certain knowledge which perhaps you do not possess. You seem surprised. *Eh bien;* listen to me: are you not in no small degree *lié* with Lord Dawton? do you not expect something from him worthy of your rank and merit?"

"You do, indeed, surprise me," said I. "However close my connection with Lord Dawton may be, I thought it much more secret than it appears to be. However, I own

that I have *a right* to expect from Lord Dawton not, perhaps, a recompense of service, but, at least, a fulfilment of promises. In this expectation I begin to believe I shall be deceived."

"You will!" answered Lady Roseville. "Bend your head lower: the walls have ears. You have a friend, an unwearied and earnest friend, with those now in power; directly he heard that Mr. V—— was promised the borough which he knew had been long engaged to you, he went straight to Lord Dawton. He found him with Lord Clandonald; however, he opened the matter immediately. He spoke with great warmth of your claims: he did more; he incorporated them with his own, which are of no mean order, and asked no other recompense for himself than the fulfilment of a long-made promise to you. Dawton was greatly confused, and Lord Clandonald replied for him that certainly there was no denying your talents; that they were very great; that you had, unquestionably, been of much service to their party; and that, consequently, it must be politic to attach you to their interests: but that there was a certain *fierté*, and assumption, and he might say (mark the climax) *independence* about you, which could not but be highly displeasing in one so young: moreover, that it was impossible to trust to you; that you pledged yourself to no party; that you spoke only of conditions and terms; that you treated the proposal of placing you in Parliament rather as a matter of favour on your part than on Lord Dawton's; and, in a word, that there was no relying upon you. Lord Dawton then took courage, and chimed in, with a long panegyric on V——, and a long account of what was due to him and to the zeal of his family; adding that, in a crisis like this, it was absolutely necessary to engage a certain rather than a doubtful and undecided support; that, for his part, if he placed you in Parliament, he thought you quite as likely to prove a foe as a friend; that, owing to the marriage of your uncle, your expectations were by no means commensurate with your presumption, and that the same talents which made your claims to favour as an ally created also no small danger in placing you in any situation where you could become hurtful

as an enemy. All this, and much more to the same purpose, was strenuously insisted upon by the worthy pair; and your friend was obliged to take his leave, perfectly convinced that, unless you assumed a more complaisant bearing or gave a more decided pledge to the new minister, it was hopeless for you to expect anything from him, at least for the present. The fact is, he stands too much in awe of you, and would rather keep you out of the House than contribute an iota towards obtaining you a seat. Upon all this you may rely as certain."

"I thank you from my heart," said I, warmly, seizing and pressing Lady Roseville's hand. "You tell me what I have long suspected; I am now upon my guard, and they shall find that I can *of*fend as well as *de*fend. But it is no time for me to boast; oblige me by informing me of the name of my unknown friend: I little thought there was a being in the world who would stir three steps for Henry Pelham."

"That friend," replied Lady Roseville, with a faltering voice and glowing cheeks, "was Sir Reginald Glanville."

"What!" cried I, "repeat the name to me again, or—" I paused and recovered myself. "Sir Reginald Glanville," I resumed, haughtily, "is too gracious to enter into my affairs. I must be strangely altered if I need the officious zeal of *any* intermeddler to redress my wrongs."

"Nay, Mr. Pelham," said the countess, hastily, "you do Glanville,—you do yourself injustice. For him, there never passes a day in which he does not mention you with the highest encomiums and the most affectionate regard. He says of late that you have altered towards him, but that he is not surprised at the change; he never mentions the cause: if I am not intruding, suffer me to inquire into it; perhaps (oh! how happy it would make me) I may be able to reconcile you; if you knew,—if you could but guess half of the noble and lofty character of Reginald Glanville, you would suffer no petty difference to divide you."

"It is no *petty* difference," said I, rising, "nor am I permitted to mention the cause. Meanwhile, may God bless you, dearest Lady Roseville, and preserve that kind and generous

heart from *worse* pangs than those of disappointed ambition or betrayed trust."

Lady Roseville looked down; her bosom heaved violently: she felt the meaning of my words. I left her and returned home.

CHAPTER LXXII.

Good Mr. Knave, give me my due,
I like a tart as well as you;
But I would starve on good roast beef,
Ere I would look so like a thief. — *The Queen of Hearts.*

Nunc vino pellite curas;
Cras ingens iterabimus æquor. — Horace.

The next morning I received a note from Guloseton, asking me to dine with him at eight, to *meet* his *chevreuil.* I sent back an answer in the affirmative, and then gave myself wholly up to considering what was the best line of conduct to pursue with regard to Lord Dawton. "It would be pleasant enough," said Anger, "to go to him to ask him boldly for the borough so often pledged to you, and, in case of his refusal, to confront, to taunt, and to break with him." "True," replied that more homely and less stage-effect arguer, which we might term Knowledge of the World; "but this would be neither useful nor dignified: common-sense never quarrels with any one. Call upon Lord Dawton, if you will,—ask him for his promise, with your second-best smile, and receive his excuses with your very best. Then do as you please,—break with him or not; you can do either with grace and quiet; never make a scene about anything: reproach and anger always *do* make a scene." "Very true," said I, in answer to the latter suggestion; and having made up my mind, I repaired a quarter before three to Lord Dawton's house.

"Ah, Pelham," said the little minister, "delighted to see you look so much the better from the country air; you will stay in town now, I hope, till the end of the season?"

"Certainly, Lord Dawton. or, at all events, till the prorogation of Parliament; how, indeed, could I do otherwise, with your lordship's kind promise before my eyes? Mr. ——, the member for your borough of ——, has, I believe, accepted the Chiltern Hundreds? I feel truly obliged to you for so promptly fulfilling your promise to me."

"Hem! my dear Pelham, hem!" murmured Lord Dawton. I bent forward as if in the attitude of listening respect, but really the more clearly to perceive and closely to enjoy his confusion. He looked up, and caught my eye, and not being too much gratified with its involuntary expression, he grew more and more embarrassed; at last he summoned courage.

"Why, my dear sir," he said, "I did, it is true, promise you that borough; but individual friendship must frequently be sacrificed to the public good. All our party insisted upon returning Mr. V—— in the place of the late member: what could I do? I mentioned your claims; they all, to a man, enlarged upon your rival's; to be sure he *is* an older person, and his family is very powerful in the Lower House: in short, you perceive, my dear Pelham,—that is, you are aware,—you can feel for the delicacy of my situation,—one could not appear too eager for one's own friends at first, and I was *forced* to concede."

Lord Dawton was now fairly delivered of his speech; it was, therefore, only left me to congratulate him on his offspring.

"My dear lord," I began, "you could not have pleased me better: Mr. V—— is a most estimable man, and I would not for the world have had you suspected of placing such a trifle as your own honour—that is to say—your promise to me, before the commands—that is to say the interests—of your party; but no more of this now. Was your lordship at the Duke of ——'s last night?"

Dawton seized joyfully the opportunity of changing the conversation, and we talked and laughed on indifferent matters

till I thought it time to withdraw; this I did with the most cordial appearance of regard and esteem; nor was it till I had fairly set my foot out of his door that I suffered myself to indulge the "black bile" at my breast. I turned towards the Green Park, and was walking slowly along the principal mall with my hands behind me, and my eyes on the ground, when I heard my own name uttered. On looking back, I perceived Lord Vincent on horseback; he stopped and conversed with me. In the humour I was in with Lord Dawton, I received him with greater warmth than I had done of late; and he also, being in a social mood, seemed so well satisfied with our *rencontre* and my behavior that he dismounted to walk with me.

"This park is a very different scene now," said Vincent, "from what it was in the times of 'The Merry Monarch;' yet it is still a spot much more to my taste than its more gaudy and less classical brother of Hyde. There is something pleasingly melancholy in walking over places haunted by history; for all of us live more in the past than the present."

"And how exactly alike in all ages," said I, "men have been. On the very spot we are on now, how many have been actuated by the same feelings that now actuate us,—how many have made perhaps exactly the same remark just made by you! It is this universal identity which forms our most powerful link with those that have been: there is a satisfaction in seeing how closely we resemble the Agamemnons of bygone times, and we take care to lose none of it by thinking how closely we also resemble the Thersites."

"True," replied Vincent: "if wise and great men did but know how little difference there is between them and the foolish or the mean, they would not take such pains to be wise and great; to use the Chinese proverb, 'they sacrifice a picture to get possession of its ashes.' It is almost a pity that the desire to advance should be so necessary to our being; ambition is often a fine but never a felicitous feeling. Cyprian, in a beautiful passage on envy, calls it 'the moth of the soul:' but perhaps even that passion is less gnawing, less a '*tabes pectoris*,' than ambition. You are surprised at my

heat; the fact is, I am enraged at thinking how much we forfeit when we look *up* only, and trample unconsciously, in the blindness of our aspiration, on the affections which strew our path. Now, you and I have been utterly estranged from each other of late. Why?—for any dispute,—any disagreement in private,—any discovery of meanness, treachery, unworthiness in the other? No! merely because I dine with Lord Lincoln, and you with Lord Dawton, *voilà tout.* Well say the Jesuits, that they who live for the public must renounce all private ties; the very day we become citizens we are to cease to be men. Our privacy is like Leo Decimus; directly it dies, all peace, comfort, joy, and sociality are to die with it: and an iron age, 'barbara vis et dira malorum omnium incommoda,' to succeed."

"It is a pity that we struck into different paths," said I: "no pleasure would have been to me greater than making our political interests the same; but—"

"Perhaps there is *no* but," interrupted Vincent; "perhaps, like the two knights in the hackneyed story, we are only giving different names to the same shield, because we view it on different sides; let us also imitate them in their reconciliation, as well as their quarrel, and since we have already run our lances against each other, be convinced of our error and make up our difference."

I was silent; indeed, I did not like to trust myself to speak.

Vincent continued:—

"I know," said he, "and it is in vain for you to conceal it, that you have been ill-used by Dawton. Mr. V—— is my first cousin; he came to me the day after the borough was given to him, and told me all that Clandonald and Dawton had said to him at the time. Believe me, they did not spare *you:* the former you have grievously offended; you know that he has quarrelled irremediably with his son Dartmore, and he insists that you are the friend and abettor of that ingenuous youth in all his debaucheries and extravagance,—'tu illum corrumpi sinis.' I tell you this without hesitation, for I know you are less vain than ambitious, and I do not care about hurting you in the one point if I advance you in the

other. As for me, I own to you candidly and frankly, that there are no pains I would spare to secure you to our party. Join us, and you shall, as I have often said, be on the parliamentary benches of our corps without a moment of unnecessary delay. More I *cannot* promise you, because I cannot promise more to myself; but from that instant your fortune, if I augur aught aright from your ability, will be in your hands. You shake your head: surely you must see that our differences are not vehement; it is a difference not of measures, but men. There is but a *verbal* disagreement between us; and we must own the wisdom of the sentence recorded in Aulus Gellius, that '*he* is but a madman who splits the weight of things upon the hairbreadths of words.' You laugh at the quaintness of the quotation; quaint proverbs are often the truest."

If my reader should think lightly of me when I own that I felt wavering and irresolute at the end of this speech, let him for a moment place himself in my situation: let him feel indignant at the treachery, the injustice, the ingratitude of one man; and, at the very height of his resentment, let him be soothed, flattered, courted, by the offered friendship and favour of another. Let him personally despise the former and esteem the latter; and let him, above all, be *convinced*, as well as *persuaded*, of the truth of Vincent's hint; namely, that no sacrifice of principle nor of measures was required,—nothing but an alliance against *men*, not measures. And who were those men? bound to me by a single tie,—meriting from my gratitude a single consideration? No! the men, above all others, who had offered me the greatest affront and deserved from me the smallest esteem.

But, however human feelings might induce me to waver, I felt that it was not by them only I was to decide. I am not a man whose vices or virtues are regulated by the impulse and passion of the moment: if I am quick to act, I am habitually slow to deliberate. I turned to Vincent, and pressed his hand. "I dare not trust myself to answer you now," said I: "give me till to-morrow; I shall then have both considered and determined."

I did not wait for his reply. I sprang from him, turned down the passage which leads to Pall Mall, and hastened home once more to commune with my own heart, and — *not* to be still.

In these confessions I have made no scruple of owning my errors and my foibles; all that could occasion mirth or benefit to the reader were his own. I have kept a veil over the darker and stormier emotions of my soul; all that could neither amuse nor instruct him *are mine!*

Hours passed on; it became time to dress; I rang for Bedos; dressed as usual — great emotions interfere little with the mechanical operations of life — and drove to Guloseton's. He was unusually entertaining; the dinner too was unusually good; but, thinking that I was sufficiently intimate with my host not to be obliged to belie my feelings, I remained *distrait*, absent, and dull.

"What is the matter with you, my friend?" said the good-natured epicure; "you have neither applauded my jokes, nor tasted my *escalopes;* and your behaviour has trifled alike with my *chevreuil* and my feelings." The proverb is right in saying "Grief is communicative." I confess that I was eager to unbosom myself to one upon whose confidence I could depend. Guloseton heard me with great attention and interest. "Little," said he kindly, "little as I care for these matters myself, I can feel for those who do: I wish I could serve you better than by advice. However, you cannot, I imagine, hesitate to accept Vincent's offer. What matters it whether you sit on one bench or on another, so that you do not sit in a thorough draught, — or dine at Lord Lincoln's or Lord Dawton's, so long as the cooks are equally good? As for Dawton, I always thought him a shuffling, mean fellow, who buys his wines at the second price, and sells his offices at the first. Come, my dear fellow, let us drink to his confusion."

So saying, Guloseton filled my glass to the brim. He had sympathized with me: I thought it, therefore, my duty to sympathize with him; nor did we part till the eyes of the *bon vivant* saw more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in the philosophy of the sober.

CHAPTER LXXIII.

Si ad honestatem nati sumus, ea aut sola expetenda est, aut certe omni pondere gravior est habenda quam reliqua omnia. — Tully.

Cas. Brutus, I do observe you now of late;
I have not from your eyes that gentleness
And show of love as I was wont to have. — *Julius Cæsar.*

I rose at my usual early hour; sleep had tended to calm, and I hope also to better, my feelings. I had now leisure to reflect that I had not embraced my party from any private or interested motive: it was not, therefore, from a private or interested motive that I was justified in deserting it. Our passions are terrible sophists! When Vincent had told me the day before that it was from men, not measures, that I was to change, and that such a change could scarcely deserve the name, my heart adopted the assertion and fancied it into truth.

I now began to perceive the delusion; were government as mechanically perfect as it has never yet been (but as I trust it may yet be), it would signify little who were the mere machines that regulated its springs; but in a constitution like ours, the chief character of which — pardon me, ye De Lolmeites — is its uncertainty; where men invariably make the measures square to the dimensions of their own talent or desire; and where, reversing the maxim of the tailor, the measures so rarely make the men; — it required no penetration to see how dangerous it was to intrust to the aristocratic prejudice of Lincoln, or the vehement imbecility of Lesborough, the execution of the very same measures which might safely be committed to the plain sense of Dawton, and, above all, to the great and various talents of his coadjutors. But what made the vital difference between the two parties was less in the leaders than in the body In the Dawton faction the

best, the purest, the wisest of the day were enrolled: they took upon themselves the origin of all the active measures, and Lord Dawton was the mere channel through which those measures flowed; the plain, the unpretending, and somewhat feeble character of Lord Dawton's mind, readily conceded to the abler components of his party the authority it was so desirable that they should exert. In Vincent's party, with the exception of himself, there was scarcely an individual with the honesty requisite for loving the projects they affected to purpose, or the talents that were necessary for carrying them into effect, even were their wishes sincere; nor was either the haughty Lincoln, or his noisy and overbearing companion, Lesborough, at all of a temper to suffer that quiet yet powerful interference of others to which Dawton unhesitatingly submitted.

I was the more resolved to do all possible justice to Dawton's party from the inclination I naturally had to lean towards the other; and in all matters where private pique or self-interest can possibly penetrate it has ever been the object of my *maturer* consideration to direct my particular attention to that side of the question which such undue partisans are the least likely to espouse. While I was gradually but clearly feeling my way to a decision, I received the following note from Guloseton: —

I said nothing to you last night of what is now to be the subject of my letter, lest you should suppose it arose rather from the heat of an extempore conviviality than its real source; namely, a sincere esteem for your mind, a sincere affection for your heart, and a sincere sympathy in your resentment and your interest.

They tell me that Lord Dawton's triumph or discomfiture rests entirely upon the success of the motion upon —— brought before the House of Commons, on the ——. I care, you know, very little, for my *own* part, which way this question is decided; do not think, therefore, that I make any sacrifice when I request you to suffer me to follow your advice in the disposal of my four votes. I imagine, of course, that you would wish them to adopt the contrary side to Lord Dawton; and upon receiving a line from you to that effect, they shall be empowered to do so.

Pray oblige me also by taking the merit of this measure upon yourself, and saying (wherever it may be useful to you) how entirely both the voters and their influence are at your disposal. I trust we shall yet play the Bel to this Dragon, and fell him from his high places.

Pity me, my dear friend; I dine out to-day, and feel already, by an intuitive shudder, that the soup will be cold, and the sherry hot. Adieu.

Ever yours,

GULOSETON.

Now, then, my triumph, my vanity, and my revenge might be fully gratified. I had before me a golden opportunity of displaying my own power, and of humbling that of the minister. My heart swelled high at the thought. Let it be forgiven me, if, for a single moment, my previous calculations and morality vanished from my mind, and I saw only the offer of Vincent and the generosity of Guloseton. But I checked the risings of my heart, and compelled my proud spirit to obedience.

I placed Guloseton's letter before me, and, as I read it once more in order to reply to it, the disinterested kindness and delicacy of one whom I had long, in the injustice of my thoughts, censured as selfish, came over me so forcibly, and contrasted so deeply with the hollowness of friends more sounding, alike in their profession and their creeds, that the tears rushed to my eyes.

A thousand misfortunes are less affecting than a single kindness.

I wrote, in answer, a warm and earnest letter of thanks for an offer the kindness of which penetrated me to the soul. I detailed at some length the reasons which induced me to the decision I had taken; I sketched also the nature of the very important motion about to be brought before the House, and deduced from that sketch the impossibility of conscientiously opposing Lord Dawton's party in the debate. I concluded with repeating the expressions my gratitude suggested; and, after declining all interference with Lord Guloseton's votes, ventured to add, that *had* I interfered, it would have been in

support of Dawton; not as a man, but a minister,—not as an individual friend, but a public servant.

I had just despatched this letter when Vincent entered; I acquainted him, though in the most respectful and friendly terms, with my determination. He seemed greatly disappointed and endeavoured to shake my resolution; finding this was in vain, he appeared at last satisfied and even affected with my reasons. When we parted, it was with a promise, confirmed by both, that no public variance should ever again alter our private opinion of each other.

When I was once more alone, and saw myself brought back to the very foot of the ladder I had so far and so fortunately climbed, when I saw that, in rejecting all the overtures of my friends, I was left utterly solitary and unaided among my foes; when I looked beyond, and saw no faint loophole of hope, no single stepping-stone on which to recommence my broken but unwearied career,—perhaps one pang of regret and repentance at my determination came across me; but there is something marvellously restorative in a good conscience, and one soon learns to look with hope to the future when one can feel justified in turning with pride to the past.

My horse came to the door at my usual hour for riding: with what gladness I sprang upon his back, felt the free wind freshening over my fevered cheek, and turned my rein towards the green lanes that border the great city on its western side. I know few counsellors more exhilarating than a spirited horse. I do not wonder that the Roman emperor made a consul of his steed. On horseback I always best feel my powers, and survey my resources; on horseback I always originate my subtlest schemes, and plan their ablest execution. Give me but a light rein and a free bound, and I am Cicero, Cato, Cæsar; dismount me, and I become a mere clod of the earth which you condemn me to touch: fire, energy, *ethereality*, have departed; I am the soil without the sun, the cask without the wine, the garments without the man.

I returned homewards with increased spirits and collected thoughts; I urged my mind from my own situation, and suffered it to rest upon what Lady Roseville had told me of

Reginald Glanville's interference in my behalf. That extraordinary man still continued powerfully to excite my interest, nor could I dwell without some yearning of the kindlier affections upon his unsolicited, and, but for Lady Roseville's communication, unknown exertions in my cause. Although the officers of justice were still actively employed in the pursuit of Tyrrell's murderer, and although the newspapers were still full of speculations on their indifferent success, public curiosity had begun to flag upon the inquiry. I had once or twice been in Glanville's company when the murder was brought upon the *tapis*, and narrowly examined his behaviour upon a subject which touched him so fearfully. I could not, however, note any extraordinary confusion or change in his countenance; perhaps the pale cheek grew somewhat paler, the dreaming eye more abstracted, and the absent spirit more wandering than before; but many other causes than guilt could account for signs so doubtful and minute. "You shall soon know all," the last words which he had addressed to me, yet rang in my ears; and most intensely did I anticipate the fulfilment of this promise. My hopes, too — those flatterers, so often the pleasing antitheses of reason — whispered that this was not the pledge of a guilty man; and yet he had said to Lady Roseville that he did not wonder at my estrangement from him: such words seemed to require a less favourable construction than those he had addressed to me; and, in making this mental remark, another, of no flattering nature to Glanville's disinterestedness, suggested itself: might not his interference for me with Lord Dawton, arise rather from policy than friendship; might it not occur to him, if, as I surmised, he was acquainted with my suspicions and acknowledged their dreadful justice, that it would be advisable to propitiate my silence? Such were among the thousand thoughts which flashed across me, and left my speculations in debate and doubt.

Nor did my reflections pass unnoticed the nature of Lady Roseville's affection for Granville. From the seeming coldness and austerity of Sir Reginald's temperament, it was likely that this was innocent, at least in act; and there was

also something guileless in the manner in which she appeared rather to exult in, than to conceal, her attachment. True that she was bound by no ties; she had neither husband nor children, for whose sake love became a crime: free and unfettered, if she gave her heart to Glanville, it was also allowable to render the gift lawful and perpetual by the blessing of the Church.

Alas! how little can woman, shut up in her narrow and limited circle of duties, know of the wandering life and various actions of her lover! Little, indeed, could Lady Roseville, when, in the heat of her enthusiasm, she spoke of the lofty and generous character of Glanville, dream of the foul and dastardly crime of which he was more than suspected; nor, while it was, perhaps, her fondest wish to ally herself to his destiny, could her wildest fancies anticipate the felon's fate, which, if death came not in a hastier and kinder shape, must sooner or later await him.

Of Thornton I had neither seen nor heard aught since my departure from Lord Chester's; that reprieve was, however, shortly to expire. I had scarcely got into Oxford Street, in my way homeward, when I perceived him crossing the street with another man. I turned round to scrutinize the features of his companion, and, in spite of a great change of dress, a huge pair of false whiskers, and an artificial appearance of increased age, my habit of observing countenances enabled me to recognize, on the instant, my intellectual and virtuous friend, Mr. Job Jonson. They disappeared in a shop, nor did I think it worth while further to observe them, though I still bore a reminiscitory spite against Mr. Job Jonson, which I was fully resolved to wreak at the first favourable opportunity.

I passed by Lady Roseville's door. Though the hour was late, and I had, therefore, but a slight chance of finding her at home, yet I thought the chance worth the trouble of inquiry. To my agreeable surprise I was admitted: no one was in the drawing-room. The servant said Lady Roseville was at that moment engaged, but would very shortly see me, and begged I would wait.

Agitated as I was by various reflections, I walked (in the restlessness of my mood) to and fro the spacious rooms which formed Lady Roseville's apartments of reception. At the far end was a small *boudoir*, where none but the goddess's favoured few were admitted. As I approached towards it, I heard voices, and the next moment recognized the deep tones of Glanville. I turned hastily away, lest I should overhear the discourse; but I had scarcely got three steps, when the convulsed sound of a woman's sob came upon my ear.

Shortly afterwards, steps descended the stairs, and the street-door opened.

The minutes rolled on, and I became impatient. The servant re-entered: Lady Roseville was so suddenly and seriously indisposed that she was unable to see me. I left the house, and, full of bewildered conjectures, returned to my apartments.

The next day was one of the most important in my life. I was standing wistfully by my fireplace, listening with the most mournful attention to a broken-winded hurdy-gurdy stationed opposite to my window, when Bedos announced Sir Reginald Glanville. It so happened that I had that morning taken the miniature I had found in the fatal field from the secret place in which I usually kept it, in order closely to examine it, lest any proof of its owner, more convincing than the initials and Thornton's interpretation, might be discovered by a minuter investigation.

The picture was lying on the table when Glanville entered: my first impulse was to seize and secrete it; my second to suffer it to remain, and to watch the effect the sight of it might produce. In following the latter, I thought it, however, as well to choose my own time for discovering the miniature; and, as I moved to the table, I threw my handkerchief carelessly over it. Glanville came up to me at once, and his countenance, usually close and reserved in its expression, assumed a franker and bolder aspect.

"You have lately changed towards me," he said: "mindful of our former friendship, I have come to demand the reason."

"Can Sir Reginald Glanville's memory," answered I, "supply him with no probable cause?"

"It can," replied Glanville, "but I would not trust *only* to that. Sit down, Pelham, and listen to me. I can read your thoughts, and I might affect to despise their import: perhaps two years since I should; at present I can pity and excuse them. I have come to you now, in the love and confidence of our early days, to claim as then your good opinion and esteem. If you require any explanation at my hands, it shall be given. My days are approaching their end. I have made up my accounts with others; I would do so with you. I confess that I would fain leave behind me in your breast the same affectionate remembrance I might heretofore have claimed, and which, whatever be your suspicions, I have done nothing to forfeit. I have, moreover, a dearer interest than my own to consult in this wish,—you color, Pelham,—you know to whom I allude; for my sister's sake, if not for my own, you will hear me."

Glanville paused for a moment. I raised the handkerchief from the miniature; I pushed the latter towards him; "Do you remember this?" said I, in a low tone.

With a wild cry, which thrilled through my heart, Glanville sprang forward and seized it. He gazed eagerly and intensely upon it; and his cheek flushed, his eyes sparkled, his breast heaved. The next moment he fell back in his chair, in one of the half swoons to which, upon a sudden and violent emotion, the debilitating effects of his disease subjected him.

Before I could come to his assistance, he had recovered. He looked wildly and fiercely upon me. "Speak," he cried, "speak,—where got you this,—where?—answer, for mercy's sake!"

"Recollect yourself," said I, sternly. "I found that token of your presence upon the spot where Tyrrell was murdered."

"True, true," said Glanville, slowly, and in an absent and abstracted tone. He ceased abruptly, and covered his face with his hands; from this attitude he started with some sudden impulse.

"And tell me," he said, in a low, inward, exulting tone, "was it — was it red with the blood of the murdered man?"

"Wretch!" I exclaimed, "do you glory in your guilt?"

"Hold!" said Glanville, rising, with an altered and haughty air; "it is not to your accusations that I am now to listen: if you are yet desirous of weighing their justice before you decide upon them, you will have the opportunity; I shall be at home at ten this night; come to me, and *you shall know all.* At present, the sight of this picture has unnerved me. Shall I see you?"

I made no other rejoinder than the brief expression of my assent, and Glanville instantly left the room.

During the whole of that day, my mind was wrought up into a state of feverish and preternatural excitement. I could not remain in the same spot for an instant: my pulse beat with the irregularity of delirium. For the last hour I placed my watch before me, and kept my eyes constantly fixed upon it. It was not *only* Glanville's confession that I was to hear: my own fate, my future connection with Ellen, rested upon the story of that night. For myself, when I called to mind Glanville's acknowledgment of the picture, and his slow and involuntary remembrance of the spot where it was found, I scarcely allowed my temper, sanguine as it was, to hope.

Some minutes before the hour of ten I repaired to Glanville's house. He was alone; the picture was before him.

I drew my chair towards him in silence, and, accidentally lifting up my eyes, encountered the opposite mirror. I started at my own face; the intensity and fearfulness of my interest had rendered it even more hueless than that of my companion.

There was a pause for some moments, at the end of which Glanville thus began.

CHAPTER LXXIV.

I DO but hide,
Under these words, like embers, every spark
Of that which has consumed me. Quick and dark
The grave is yawning; — as its roof shall cover
My limbs with dust and worms, under and over,
So let oblivion hide this grief. — *Julian and Maddalo.*

. . . . . .

With thee the very future fled,
I stand amidst the past alone,
A tomb which still shall guard the dead,
Though every earthlier trace be flown;
A tomb o'er which the weeds that love
Decay — their wild luxuriance wreathe!
The cold and callous stone above —
And only thou and Death beneath.
From Unpublished Poems by ——.

THE HISTORY OF SIR REGINALD GLANVILLE.

"YOU remember my character at school, — the difficulty with which you drew me from the visionary and abstracted loneliness which, even at that time, was more consonant to my taste than all the sports and society resorted to by other boys; and the deep, and, to you, inexplicable delight with which I returned to my reveries and solitude again. That character has continued through life the same; circumstances have strengthened, not altered it. So has it been with *you;* the temper, the habits, the tastes, so strongly contrasted with mine in boyhood, have lost nothing of that contrast. Your ardour for the various ambitions of life is still the antipodes to my indifference; your daring, restless, thoughtful resolution in the pursuit still shames my indolence and abstraction. You are still the votary of the world, but will become its conqueror; I its fugitive, and shall die its victim.

"After we parted at school, I went for a short time to a tutor's in ——shire. Of this place I soon grew weary; and my father's death rendering me in a great measure my own master I lost no time in leaving it. I was seized with that mania for travel common enough to all persons of my youth and disposition. My mother allowed me an almost unlimited command over the fortune eventually to be my own; and, yielding to my wishes, rather than her fears, she suffered me, at the age of eighteen, to set out for the Continent alone. Perhaps the quiet and reserve of my character made her think me less exposed to the dangers of youth than if I had been of a more active and versatile temper. This is no uncommon mistake; a serious and contemplative disposition is, however, often the worst formed to acquire readily the knowledge of the world, and always the most calculated to suffer deeply from the experience.

"I took up my residence for some time at Spa. It is, you know, perhaps, a place dull enough to make gambling the only amusement; every one played, and I did not escape the contagion; nor did I wish it: for, like the minister Godolphin, my habitual silence made me love gaming for its own sake, because it was a substitute for conversation. This pursuit brought me acquainted with Mr. Tyrrell, who was then staying at Spa; he had not, at that time, quite dissipated his fortune, but was daily advancing towards so desirable a consummation. A gambler's acquaintance is readily made and easily kept,—provided you gamble too.

"We became as intimate as the reserve of my habits ever suffered me to become with any one but you. He was many years older than I,—had seen a great deal of the world,—had mixed much in its best societies, and at that time, whatever was the vulgarity of his mind, had little of the coarseness of *manner* which very soon afterwards distinguished him; evil communication works rapidly in its results. Our acquaintance was therefore natural enough, especially when it is considered that my purse was entirely at his disposal: for borrowing is 'twice blessed,' in him that takes and him that gives; the receiver becomes complaisant and

conceding, and the lender thinks favourably of one he has obliged.

"We parted at Spa, under a mutual promise to write. I forget if this promise was kept,—probably not; we were not, however, the worse friends for being bad correspondents. I continued my travels for about another year: I then returned to England, the same melancholy and dreaming enthusiast as before. It is true that we are the creatures of circumstances; but circumstances are also, in a great measure, the creatures of *us*. I mean, they receive their influences from the previous bent of our own minds: what raises one would depress another, and what vitiates my neighbour might correct me. Thus the experience of the world makes some persons more worldly, others more abstracted; and the indulgence of the senses becomes a violence to one mind, and a second nature to another. As for me, I had tasted all the pleasures youth and opulence can purchase, and was more averse to them than ever. I had mixed with many varieties of men; I was still more riveted to the *monotony* of *self*.

"I cannot hope, while I mention these peculiarities, that I am a very uncommon character: I believe the present age has produced many such. Some time hence, it will be a curious inquiry to ascertain the causes of that acute and sensitive morbidity of mind which has been, and still is, so epidemic a disease. You know me well enough to believe that I am not fond of the cant of assuming an artificial character or of creating a fictitious interest; and I am far from wishing to impose upon you a malady of constitution for a dignity of mind. You must pardon my prolixity. I own that it is very painful to me to come to the main part of my confessions, and I am endeavouring to prepare myself by lingering over the prelude."

Glanville paused here for a few moments. In spite of the sententious coolness with which he pretended to speak, I saw that he was powerfully and painfully affected.

"Well," he continued, "to resume the thread of my narrative; after I had stayed some weeks with my mother and sister, I took advantage of their departure for the Continent, and resolved to make a tour through England. Rich people,

and I have always been very rich, grow exceedingly tired of the embarrassment of their riches. I seized with delight at the idea of travelling without carriages and servants; I took merely a favourite horse, and the black dog, poor Terror, which you see now at my feet.

"The day I commenced this plan was to me the epoch of a new and terrible existence. However, you must pardon me if I am not here sufficiently diffuse. Suffice it that I became acquainted with a being whom, for the first and only time in my life, I loved! This miniature attempts to express her likeness; the initials at the back, interwoven with my own, are hers."

"Yes," said I, incautiously, "they are the initials of Gertrude Douglas."

"What!" cried Glanville, in a loud tone, which he instantly checked, and continued in an indrawn, muttered whisper: "how long is it since I heard that name! and now —now—". He broke off abruptly, and then said, with a calmer voice, "I know not how you have learnt *her* name; perhaps you will explain."

"From Thornton," said I.

"And has he told you more?" cried Glanville, as if gasping for breath—"the history—the dreadful—"

"Not a word," said I, hastily; "he was with me when I found the picture, and he explained the initials."

"It is well!" answered Glanville, recovering himself; "you will see presently if I have reason to love that those foul and sordid lips should profane the story I am about to relate. Gertrude was an only daughter; though of gentle blood, she was no match for me, either in rank or fortune. Did I say just now that the world had not altered me? See my folly; one year before I saw her, and I should not have thought *her*, but *myself*, honoured by a marriage; twelve little months had sufficed to—God forgive me! I took advantage of her love, —her youth,—her innocence; she fled with me,—*but not to the altar!*"

Again Glanville paused, and again, by a violent effort, conquered his emotion, and proceeded:—

"Never let vice be done by halves; never let a man invest all his purer affections in the woman he ruins; never let him cherish the kindness, if he gratifies the selfishness, of his heart. A profligate who really loves his victim is one of the most wretched of beings. In spite of my successful and triumphant passion; in spite of the first intoxication of possession, and the better and deeper delight of a reciprocity of thought, feeling, sympathy for the first time found; in the midst of all the luxuries my wealth could produce, and of the voluptuous and spring-like hues with which youth, health, and first love clothe the earth which the loved one treads, and the air which she inhales, — in spite of these, in spite of all, I was anything but happy. If Gertrude's cheek seemed a shade more pale, or her eyes less bright, I remembered the sacrifice she had made me, and believed that *she* felt it too. It was in vain that, with the tender and generous devotion never found but in woman, she assured me that my love was a recompense for all: the more touching was her tenderness, the more poignant was my remorse. I never loved but her; I have never, therefore, entered into the commonplace of passion, and I cannot, even to this day, look upon her sex as ours do in general. I thought, I think so still, that ingratitude to a woman is often a more odious offence — I am sure it contains a more painful penalty — than ingratitude to a man. But enough of this; if you know me, you can penetrate the nature of my feelings; if not, it is in vain to expect your sympathy.

"I never loved living long in one place. We travelled over the greater part of England and France. What must be the enchantment of love when accompanied with innocence and joy, since even in sin, in remorse, in grief, it brings us a rapture to which all other things are tame! Oh! those were moments steeped in the very elixir of life; overflowing with the hoarded fondness and sympathies of hearts too full for words, and yet too agitated for silence, when we journeyed alone, and at night, and as the shadows and stillness of the waning hours gathered round us, drew closer to each other, and concentrated this breathing world in the deep and embracing sentiment of our mutual love! It was then that I laid

my burning temples on her bosom, and felt, while my hand clasped hers, that my visions were realized, and my wandering spirit had sunk into its rest.

"I remember well that one night we were travelling through one of the most beautiful parts of England; it was in the very height and flush of summer, and the moon (what scene of love — whether in reality or romance — has anything of tenderness, or passion, or divinity, where her light is not!) filled the intense skies of June with her presence and cast a sadder and paler beauty over Gertrude's cheek. She was always of a melancholy and despondent temper: perhaps, for that reason, she was more congenial to my own; and when I gazed upon her that night, I was not surprised to see her eyes filled with tears. 'You will laugh at me,' she said, as I kissed them off and inquired into the cause: 'but I feel a presentiment that I cannot shake off; it tells me that you will travel this road again before many months are past, and that I shall not be with you, perhaps not upon the earth.' She was right in all her forebodings but the suggestion of her death; *that* came later.

"We took up our residence for some time at a beautiful situation, a short distance from a small watering-place. At this watering-place, to my great surprise, I met with Tyrrell. He had come there partly to see a relation from whom he had some expectations, and partly to recruit his health, which was much broken by his irregularities and excesses. I could not refuse to renew my old acquaintance with him: and, indeed, I thought him too much of a man of the world, and of society, to feel with him that particular delicacy in regard to Gertrude which made me in general shun all intercourse with my former friends. He was in great pecuniary embarrassment, — much more deeply so than I then imagined; for I believed the embarrassment to be only temporary. However, my purse was then, as before, at his disposal, and he did not scruple to avail himself very largely of my offers. He came frequently to our house; and poor Gertrude, who thought I had, for her sake, made a real sacrifice in renouncing my acquaintance, endeavoured to conquer her usual diffidence, and that more

painful feeling than diffidence, natural to her station, and even to affect a pleasure in the society of *my* friend, which she was very far from feeling.

"I was detained at —— for several weeks by Gertrude's confinement. The child — happy being! — died a week after its birth. Gertrude was still in bed, and unable to leave it, when I received a letter from Ellen, to say that my mother was then staying at Toulouse, and dangerously ill; if I wished once more to see her, Ellen besought me to lose no time in setting off for the Continent. You may imagine my situation, or rather you cannot, for you cannot conceive the smallest particle of that intense love I bore to Gertrude. To you — to any other man, it might seem no extraordinary hardship to leave her even for an uncertain period: to me it was like tearing away the very life from my heart.

"I procured her a sort of half-companion and half-nurse: I provided for her everything that the most anxious and fearful love could suggest; and, with a mind full of forebodings too darkly to be realized hereafter, I hastened to the nearest seaport and set sail for France.

"When I arrived at Toulouse my mother was much better, but still in a very uncertain and dangerous state of health. I stayed with her for more than a month, during which time every post brought me a line from Gertrude, and bore back a message from 'my heart to hers' in return. This was no mean consolation, more especially when each letter spoke of increasing health and strength. At the month's end, I was preparing to return; my mother was slowly recovering, and I no longer had any fears on her account: but there are links in our destiny fearfully interwoven with each other, and ending only in the anguish of our ultimate doom. The day before that fixed for my departure, I had been into a house where an epidemic disease raged: that night I complained of oppressive and deadly illness; before morning I was in a high fever.

"During the time I was sensible of my state, I wrote constantly to Gertrude, and carefully concealed my illness; but for several days I was delirious. When I recovered I called eagerly for my letters: *there were none,— none!* I could not

believe I was yet awake; but days still passed on, and not a line from England,—from Gertrude. The instant I was able, I insisted upon putting horses to my carriage: I could bear no longer the torture of my suspense. By the most rapid journeys my debility would allow me to bear I arrived in England. I travelled down to —— by the same road that I had gone over with her! the words of her foreboding, at that time, sank like ice into my heart, 'You will travel this road again before many months are past, and I shall not be with you; perhaps I shall not be upon the earth!' At that thought I could have called unto the grave to open for me. Her unaccountable and lengthened silence, in spite of all the urgency and entreaties of my letters for a reply, filled me with presentiments the most fearful. Oh, God—oh, God, they were nothing to the truth!

"At last I arrived at ——: my carriage stopped at the very house; my whole frame was perfectly frozen with dread; I trembled from limb to limb; the ice of a thousand winters seemed curdling through my blood. The bell rang—once, twice; no answer; I would have leaped out of the carriage; I would have forced an entrance, but I was unable to move. A man fettered and spell-bound by an incubus is less helpless than I was. At last, an old female I had never seen before appeared.

"'Where is she? How!—' I could utter no more; my eyes were fixed upon the inquisitive and frightened countenance opposite to my own. Those eyes, I thought, might have said all that my lips could not; I was deceived; the old woman understood me no more that I did her: another person appeared; I recognized the face; it was that of a girl who had been one of our attendants. Will you believe that at that sight,—the sight of one I had seen before, and could associate with the remembrance of the breathing, the living, the present Gertrude,—a thrill of joy flashed across me, my fears seemed to vanish, my spell to cease?

"I sprang from the carriage; I caught the girl by the robe. 'Your mistress,' said I, 'your mistress—she is well—she is alive? speak, speak!' The girl shrieked out; my eagerness,

and perhaps my emaciated and altered appearance, terrified her; but she had the strong nerves of youth, and was soon reassured. She requested me to step in, and she would tell me all. My wife (Gertrude always went by that name) *was* alive, and, she believed, well; but she had left that place some weeks since. Trembling and still fearful, but in heaven, comparatively to my former agony, I followed the girl and the old woman into the house.

"The former got me some water. 'Now,' said I, when I had drunk a long and hearty draught, 'I am ready to hear *all;* my wife has left this house, you say,—for what place?' The girl hesitated and looked down; the old woman, who was somewhat deaf, and did not rightly understand my questions, or the nature of the personal interest I had in the reply, answered,—'What does the gentleman want? the poor young lady who was last here? Lord help her!'

"'What of her!' I called out in new alarm. 'What of her? Where has she gone? Who took her away?'

"'Who took her?' mumbled the old woman, fretful at my impatient tone; 'who took her? *why, the mad doctor, to be sure!*'

"I heard no more; my frame could support no longer the agonies my mind had undergone; I fell lifeless on the ground.

"When I recovered it was at the dead of the night. I was in bed, the old woman and the girl were at my side. I rose slowly and calmly. You know, all men who have ever suffered much know the strange anomalies of despair,—the quiet of our veriest anguish. Deceived by my bearing, I learned by degrees from my attendants that Gertrude had some weeks since betrayed certain symptoms of insanity; that these, in a very few hours, arose to an alarming pitch. From some reason the woman could not explain she had, a short time before, discarded the companion I had left with her; she was, therefore, alone among servants. They sent for the ignorant practitioners of the place; they tried their nostrums without success; her madness increased; her attendants, with that superstitious horror of insanity common to the lower

classes, became more and more violently alarmed; the landlady insisted on her removal; and — and — I told you, Pelham — I told you they sent her away — sent her to a madhouse! All this I listened to! — all! — ay, and patiently. I noted down the address of her present abode; it was about the distance of twenty miles from ——. I ordered fresh horses and set off immediately.

"I arrived there at daybreak. It was a large old house, which, like a French hotel, seemed to have no visible door: dark and gloomy, the pile appeared worthy of the purpose to which it was devoted. It was a long time before we aroused any one to answer our call; at length I was ushered into a small parlour — how minutely I remember every article in the room! — what varieties there are in the extreme passions! sometimes the same feeling will deaden all the senses, sometimes render them a hundredfold more acute!

"At last, a man of a smiling and rosy aspect appeared. He pointed to a chair, rubbed his hands, and begged me to unfold my business; few words sufficed to do that. I requested to see his patient; I demanded by what authority she had been put under his care. The man's face altered. He was but little pleased with the nature of my visit. 'The lady,' he said, coolly, 'had been intrusted to his care, with an adequate remuneration, by Mr. Tyrrell; without that gentleman's permission he could not think even of suffering me to see her.' I controlled my passion; I knew something, if not of the nature of private madhouses, at least of that of mankind. I claimed his patient as my wife: I expressed myself obliged by his care, and begged his acceptance of a further remuneration, which I tendered, and which was eagerly accepted. The way was now cleared: there is no hell to which a golden branch will not win your admittance.

"The man detained me no longer; he hastened to lead the way. We passed through various long passages: sometimes the low moan of pain and weakness came upon my ear; sometimes the confused murmur of the idiot's drivelling soliloquy. From one passage, at right angles with the one through which we proceeded, broke a fierce and thrilling

shriek; it sank at once into silence,—*perhaps beneath the lash!*

"We were now in a different department of the building: all was silent, hushed, deep, breathless; this seemed to me more awful than the terrible sounds I had just heard. My guide went slowly on, sometimes breaking the stillness of the dim gallery by the jingle of his keys; sometimes by a muttered panegyric on himself and his humanity. I neither heeded nor answered him.

"We read in the annals of the Inquisition of every limb, nerve, sinew of the victim being so nicely and accurately strained to their utmost that the frame would not bear the additional screwing of a single hairbreadth. Such seemed *my* state. We came to a small door, at the right hand; it was the last but one in the passage. We paused before it. 'Stop,' said I, 'for one moment;' and I was so faint and sick at heart that I leaned against the wall to recover myself before I let him open the door: when he did, it was a greater relief than I can express to see that all was utterly dark. 'Wait, sir,' said the guide, as he entered; and a sullen noise told me that he was unbarring the heavy shutter.

"Slowly the gray cold light of the morning broke in; a dark figure was stretched upon a wretched bed at the far end of the room. She raised herself at the sound. She turned her face towards me; I did not fall, nor faint, nor shriek; I stood motionless, as if fixed into stone: and yet it was Gertrude upon whom I gazed. O, Heaven! who but myself could have recognized her? Her cheek was as the cheek of the dead,—the hueless skin clung to the bone; the eye was dull and glassy for one moment; the next it became terribly and preternaturally bright,—but not with the ray of intellect or consciousness or recognition. She looked long and hard at me; a voice, hollow and broken, but which still penetrated my heart, came forth through the wan lips that scarcely moved with the exertion. 'I am very cold,' it said; 'but if I complain you will beat me.' She fell down again upon the bed, and hid her face.

"My guide, who was leaning carelessly by the window,

turned to me with a sort of smirk. 'This is her way, sir,' he said; 'her madness is of a very singular description: we have not, as yet, been able to discover how far it extends; sometimes she seems conscious of the past, sometimes utterly oblivious of everything; for days she is perfectly silent, or, at least, says nothing more than you have just heard; but, at times, she raves so violently, that — that — *but I never use force where it can be helped.*'

"I looked at the man, but I could not answer, unless I had torn him to pieces on the spot. I turned away hastily from the room: but I did not quit the house without Gertrude; I placed her in the carriage, by my side, notwithstanding all the protestations and fears of the keeper; these were readily silenced by the sum I gave him; it was large enough to have liberated half his household. In fact, I gathered from his conversation that Tyrrell had spoken of Gertrude as an unhappy female whom he himself had seduced and would now be rid of. I thank you, Pelham, for that frown, but keep your indignation till a fitter season for it.

"I took *my* victim, for I then regarded her as such, to a secluded and lonely spot: I procured for her whatever advice England could afford; all was in vain. Night and day I was by her side, but she never, for a moment, seemed to recollect me: yet were there times of fierce and overpowering delirium, when my name was uttered in the transport of the most passionate enthusiasm, — when my features as absent, though not present, were recalled and dwelt upon with all the minuteness of the most faithful detail; and I knelt by her in all those moments, when no other human being was near, and clasped her wan hand, and wiped the dew from her forehead, and gazed upon her convulsed and changing face, and called upon her in a voice which could once have allayed her wildest emotions; and had the agony of seeing her eye dwell upon me with the most estranged indifference or the most vehement and fearful aversion. But, ever and anon, she uttered words which chilled the very marrow of my bones; words which I would not, dared not believe, had any meaning or method in their madness, but which entered into my own brain and

preyed there like the devouring of a fire. There *was* a truth in those ravings,—a reason in that incoherence; and my cup was not yet full.

"At last, one physician, who appeared to me to have more knowledge than the rest of the mysterious workings of her dreadful disease, advised me to take her to the scenes of her first childhood: 'Those scenes,' said he, justly, 'are in all stages of life the most fondly remembered; and I have noted that, in many cases of insanity, places are easier recalled than persons; perhaps, if we can once awaken one link in the chain, it will communicate to the rest.'

"I took this advice and set off to Norfolk. Her early home was not many miles distant from the church-yard where you once met me, and in that church-yard her mother was buried. *She* had died before Gertrude's flight; the father's death had followed it: perhaps my sufferings were a just retribution! The house had gone into other hands, and I had no difficulty in engaging it. Thank Heaven, I was spared the pain of seeing any of Gertrude's relations.

"It was night when we moved to the house. I had placed within the room where she used to sleep all the furniture and books with which it appeared, from my inquiries, to have been formerly filled. We laid her in the bed that had held that faded and altered form in its freshest and purest years. I shrouded myself in one corner of the room, and counted the dull minutes till the daylight dawned. I pass over the detail of my recital: the experiment partially succeeded; would to God that it had not!—would that she had gone down to her grave with her dreadful secret unrevealed! would—but—"

Here Glanville's voice failed him, and there was a brief silence before he recommenced.

"Gertrude now had many lucid intervals; but these my presence was always sufficient to change into a delirious raving, even more incoherent than her insanity had ever yet been. She would fly from me with the most fearful cries, bury her face in her hands, and seem like one oppressed and haunted by a supernatural visitation, as long as I remained in

the room; the moment I left her, she began, though slowly, to recover.

"This was to me the bitterest affliction of all: to be forbidden to nurse, to cherish, to tend her, was like taking from me my last hope! But little can the thoughtless or the worldly dream of the depths of a real love; I used to wait all day by her door, and it was luxury enough to me to catch her accents, or hear her move or sigh, or even weep; and all night, when she could not know of my presence, I used to lie down by her bedside; and when I sank into a short and convulsed sleep, I saw her once more, in my brief and fleeting dreams, in all the devoted love and glowing beauty which had once constituted the whole of my happiness and *my world.*

"One day I had been called from my post by her door. They came to me hastily,—she was in strong convulsions. I flew upstairs, and supported her in my arms till the fits had ceased: we then placed her in bed; she never rose from it again: but on that bed of death, the words, as well as the cause of her former insanity were explained,—the mystery was unravelled.

"It was a still and breathless night. The moon, which was at its decrease, came through the half-closed shutters, and, beneath its solemn and eternal light, she yielded to my entreaties and revealed all. The man—my friend—Tyrrell—had polluted her ear with his addresses, and when forbidden the house, had bribed the woman I had left with her to convey his letters; she was discharged: but Tyrrell was no ordinary villain; he entered the house one evening when no one but Gertrude was there. Come near me, Pelham—nearer; bend down your ear; he used force, violence! That night Gertrude's senses deserted her: you know the rest.

"The moment that I gathered, from Gertrude's broken sentences, their meaning, that moment the demon entered into my soul. All human feelings seemed to fly from my heart; it shrank into one burning and thirsty and fiery want, and that want was for revenge! I would have sprung from the bedside, but Gertrude's hand clung to me and detained me: the damp, chill grasp grew colder and colder; it ceased; the

hand fell; I turned; one slight but awful shudder went over that face, made yet more wan by the light of the waning and ghastly moon,—one convulsion shook the limbs,—one murmur passed the falling and hueless lips. I cannot tell you the rest—you know—you can guess it.

"That day week we buried her in the lonely church-yard where she had, in her lucid moments, wished to lie,—by the side of her mother."

CHAPTER LXXV.

I BREATHED,
But not the breath of human life;
A serpent round my heart was wreathed,
And stung my very thought to strife.—*The Giaour.*

"THANK Heaven, the most painful part of my story is at an end. You will now be able to account for our meeting in the church-yard at ——. I secured myself a lodging at a cottage not far from the spot which held Gertrude's remains. Night after night I wandered to that lonely place, and longed for a couch beside the sleeper, whom I mourned in the selfishness of my soul. I prostrated myself on the mound; I humbled myself to tears. In the overflowing anguish of my heart I forgot all that had aroused its stormier passions into life. Revenge, hatred,—all vanished. I lifted up my face to the tender heavens: I called aloud to the silent and placid air; and when I turned again to the unconscious mound, I thought of nothing but the sweetness of our early love and the bitterness of her early death. It was in such moments that your footstep broke upon my grief: the instant others had seen me,—other eyes had penetrated the sanctity of my regret,—from that instant, whatever was more soft and holy in the passions and darkness of my mind seemed to vanish away like a scroll. I again returned to the intense and withering remembrance which was henceforward to make the

very key and pivot of my existence. I again recalled the last night of Gertrude's life; I again shuddered at the low murmured sounds, whose dreadful sense broke slowly upon my soul. I again felt the cold — cold, slimy grasp of those wan and dying fingers; and I again nerved my heart to an iron strength, and vowed deep, deep-rooted, endless, implacable revenge.

"The morning after the night you saw me, I left my abode. I went to London, and attempted to methodize my plans of vengeance. The first thing to discover was Tyrrell's present residence. By accident I heard he was at Paris, and, within two hours of receiving the intelligence, I set off for that city. On arriving there, the habits of the gambler soon discovered him to my search. I saw him one night at a hell. He was evidently in distressed circumstances, and the fortune of the table was against him. Unperceived by him, I feasted my eyes on his changing countenance, as those deadly and wearing transitions of feeling, only to be produced by the gaming-table, passed over it. While I gazed upon him, a thought of more exquisite and refined revenge than had yet occurred to me flashed upon my mind. Occupied with the ideas it gave rise to, I went into the adjoining room, which was quite empty. There I seated myself, and endeavoured to develop more fully the rude and imperfect outline of my scheme.

"The arch tempter favoured me with a trusty coadjutor in my designs. I was lost in a revery, when I heard myself accosted by name. I looked up, and beheld a man whom I had often seen with Tyrrell, both at Spa and —— (the watering-place, where, with Gertrude, I had met Tyrrell). He was a person of low birth and character; but esteemed, from his love of coarse humour and vulgar enterprise, a man of infinite parts — a sort of Yorick — by the set most congenial to Tyrrell's tastes. By this undue reputation, and the *levelling* habit of gaming, to which he was addicted, he was raised, in certain societies, much above his proper rank: need I say that this man was Thornton? I was but slightly acquainted with him; however, he accosted me cordially, and endeavoured to draw me into conversation.

"'Have you seen Tyrrell?' said he, 'he is at it again; what 's bred in the bone, you know, etc.' I turned pale with the mention of Tyrrell's name, and replied very laconically, to what purpose I forget. 'Ah! ah!' rejoined Thornton, eying me with an air of impertinent familiarity, 'I see you have not forgiven him; he played you but a shabby trick at ——; seduced your mistress, or something of that sort; he told me all about it: pray, how is the poor girl now?'

"I made no reply; I sank down and gasped for breath. All I had suffered seemed nothing to the indignity I then endured. *She* — *she* — who had *once* been my pride — my honour — life — to be thus spoken of — and —. I could not pursue the idea. I rose hastily, looked at Thornton with a glance which might have abashed a man less shameless and callous than himself, and left the room.

"That night, as I tossed restless and feverish on my bed of thorns, I saw how useful Thornton might be to me in the prosecution of the scheme I had entered into; and the next morning I sought him out, and purchased (no very difficult matter) both his secrecy and his assistance. My plan of vengeance, to one who had seen and observed less of the varieties of human nature than you have done, might seem far-fetched and unnatural; for while the superficial are ready to allow eccentricity as natural in the coolness of ordinary life, they never suppose it can exist in the heat of the passions, — as if, in such moments, anything was ever considered absurd in the means which was favourable to the end. Were the secrets of one passionate and irregulated heart laid bare, there would be more romance in them than in all the fables which we turn from with incredulity and disdain, as exaggerated and overdrawn.

"Among the thousand schemes for retribution which had chased each other across my mind, the death of my victim was only the ulterior object. Death, indeed — the pang of one moment — appeared to me but very feeble justice for the life of lingering and restless anguish to which his treachery had condemned *me;* but *my* penance, *my* doom, I could have forgiven: it was the fate of a more innocent and injured be-

ing which irritated the sting and fed the venom of my revenge. That revenge no ordinary punishment could appease. If fanaticism can only be satisfied by the rack and the flames, you may readily conceive a like unappeasable fury in a hatred so deadly, so concentrated, and so just as mine; and if fanaticism persuades itself into a virtue, so also did my hatred.

"The scheme which I resolved upon was to attach Tyrrell more and more to the gaming-table, to be present at his infatuation, to feast my eyes upon the feverish intensity of his suspense; to reduce him, step by step, to the lowest abyss of poverty; to glut my soul with the abjectness and humiliation of his penury; to strip him of all aid, consolation, sympathy, and friendship; to follow him, unseen, to his wretched and squalid home; to mark the struggles of the craving nature with the loathing pride; and, finally, to watch the frame wear, the eye sink, the lip grow livid, and all the terrible and torturing progress of gnawing want to utter starvation. Then, in that last state, but not before, I might reveal myself; stand by the hopeless and succourless bed of death; shriek out in the dizzy ear a name, which could treble the horrors of remembrance; snatch from the struggling and agonizing conscience the last plank, the last straw, to which, in its madness, it could cling, and blacken the shadows of departing life, by opening to the shuddering sense the threshold of an impatient and yawning hell.

"Hurried away by the unhallowed fever of these projects, I thought of nothing but their accomplishment. I employed Thornton, who still maintained his intimacy with Tyrrell, to decoy him more and more to the gambling-house; and, as the unequal chances of the public table were not rapid enough in their termination to consummate the ruin even of an impetuous and vehement gamester like Tyrrell so soon as my impatience desired, Thornton took every opportunity of engaging him in private play, and accelerating my object by the unlawful arts of which he was master. My enemy was every day approaching the farthest verge of ruin; near relations he had none,—all his distant ones he had disobliged; all his friends, and even his acquaintance, he had fatigued by his importunity

or disgusted by his conduct. In the whole world there seemed not a being who would stretch forth a helping hand to save him from the total and penniless beggary to which he was hopelessly advancing. Out of the wrecks of his former property and the generosity of former friends, whatever he had already wrung had been immediately staked at the gaming-house and as immediately lost.

"Perhaps this would not so soon have been the case, if Thornton had not artfully fed and sustained his expectations. He had been long employed by Tyrrell in a professional capacity, and he knew well all the gamester's domestic affairs: and when he promised, should things come to the worst, to find some expedient to restore them, Tyrrell easily adopted so flattering a belief.

"Meanwhile I had taken the name and disguise under favour of which you met me at Paris, and Thornton had introduced me to Tyrrell as a young Englishman of great wealth and still greater inexperience. The gambler grasped eagerly at an acquaintance which Thornton readily persuaded him he could turn to such account; and I had thus every facility of marking, day by day, how my plot thickened and my vengeance hastened to its triumph.

"This was not all. I said there was not in the wide world a being who would have saved Tyrrell from the fate he deserved and was approaching. I forgot, there *was* one who still clung to him with affection, and for whom he still seemed to harbour the better and purer feelings of less degraded and guilty times. This person (you will guess readily it was a woman) I made it my especial business and care to wean away from my prey; I would not suffer him a consolation he had denied to me. I used all the arts of seduction to obtain the transfer of her affections. Whatever promises and vows — whether of love or wealth — could effect were tried; nor, at last, without success: *I* triumphed. The woman became my slave. It was she who, whenever Tyrrell faltered in his course to destruction, combated his scruples and urged on his reluctance; it was she who informed me minutely of his pitiful finances, and assisted, to her utmost, in expediting their

decay. The still more bitter treachery of deserting him in his veriest want I reserved till the fittest occasion, and contemplated with a savage delight.

"I was embarrassed in my scheme by two circumstances: first, Thornton's acquaintance with you; and, secondly, Tyrrell's receipt (some time afterwards) of a very unexpected sum of two hundred pounds, in return for renouncing all further and *possible* claim on the purchasers of his estate. To the former, so far as it might interfere with my plans or lead to my detection, you must pardon me for having put a speedy termination: the latter threw me into great consternation; for Tyrrell's first idea was to renounce the gaming-table, and endeavour to live upon the trifling pittance he had acquired as long as the utmost economy would permit.

"This idea Margaret, the woman I spoke of, according to my instructions, so artfully and successfully combated that Tyrrell yielded to his natural inclination, and returned once more to the infatuation of his favourite pursuit. However, I had become restlessly impatient for the conclusion to this prefatory part of my revenge; and, accordingly, Thornton and myself arranged that Tyrrell should be persuaded by the former to risk all, even to his very last farthing, in a private game with me. Tyrrell, who believed he should readily recruit himself by my unskilfulness in the game, fell easily into the snare; and on the second night of our engagement, he not only had lost the whole of his remaining pittance, but had signed bonds owning to a debt of far greater amount than he, at that time, could ever even have dreamt of possessing.

"Flushed, heated, almost maddened with my triumph, I yielded to the exultation of the moment. I did not know you were so near,—I discovered myself,—you remember the scene. I went joyfully home: and for the first time since Gertrude's death I was happy; but there I imagined my vengeance only would begin; I revelled in the burning hope of marking the hunger and extremity that must ensue. The next day, when Tyrrell turned round, in his despair, for one momentary word of comfort from the lips to which he believed, in the fond credulity of his heart, falsehood and

treachery never came, his last earthly friend taunted and deserted him. Mark me, Pelham: I was by and heard her!

"But here my power of retribution was to close: from the thirst still unslaked and unappeased, the cup was abruptly snatched. Tyrrell disappeared; no one knew whither. I set Thornton's inquiries at work. A week afterwards he brought me word that Tyrrell had died in extreme want, and from very despair. Will you credit that, at hearing this news, my first sensations were only rage and disappointment? True, he had died, died in all the misery my heart could wish, but *I had not seen* him die; and the death-bed seemed to me robbed of its bitterest pang.

"I know not to this day, though I have often questioned him, what interest Thornton had in deceiving me by this tale: for my own part, I believe that he himself was deceived;[1] certain it is (for I inquired), that a person very much answering to Tyrrell's description had perished in the state Thornton mentioned; and this might, therefore, in all probability, have misled him.

"I left Paris, and returned, through Normandy, to England (where I remained some weeks); there we again met: but I think we did *not* meet till I had been persecuted by the insolence and importunity of Thornton. The tools of our passions cut both ways: like the monarch who employed strange beasts in his army, we find our treacherous allies less destructive to others than ourselves. But I was not of a temper to brook the tauntings or the encroachment of my own creature: it had been with but an ill grace that I had endured his familiarity, when I absolutely required his services; much less could I suffer his intrusion when those services,—services not of love, but hire, were no longer necessary. Thornton, like all persons of his stamp, had a low pride, which I was constantly offending. He had mixed with men more than my equals in rank on a familiar footing, and he could ill brook the *hauteur* with which my disgust at his character absolutely constrained me to treat him. It is true that the profuseness of my liberality was such that the mean wretch

[1] It seems (from subsequent investigation) that this was really the case.

stomached affronts for which he was so largely paid; but, with the cunning and malicious spite natural to him, he knew well how to repay them in kind. While he assisted, he affected to ridicule, my revenge; and though he soon saw that he durst not, for his very life, breathe a syllable openly against Gertrude or her memory, yet he contrived, by general remarks and covert insinuations, to gall me to the very quick and in the very tenderest point. Thus a deep and cordial antipathy to each other arose and grew and strengthened, till, I believe, like the fiends in hell, our mutual hatred became our common punishment.

"No sooner had I returned to England than I found him here awaiting my arrival. He favoured me with frequent visits and requests for money. Although not possessed of any secret really important affecting my character, he knew well that he was possessed of one important to my quiet; and he availed himself to the utmost of my strong and deep aversion even to the most delicate recurrence to my love to Gertrude and its unhallowed and disastrous termination. At length, however, he wearied me. I found that he was sinking into the very dregs and refuse of society, and I could not longer brook the idea of enduring his familiarity and feeding his vices.

"I pass over any detail of my own feelings, as well as my *outward* and *worldly* history. Over my mind a great change had passed: I was no longer torn by violent and contending passions; upon the tumultuous sea a dead and heavy torpor had fallen; the very winds, necessary for health, had ceased: —

"I slept on the abyss without a surge."

One violent and engrossing passion is among the worst of all *immoralities*, for it leaves the mind too stagnant and exhausted for those activities and energies which constitute our real duties. However, now that the tyrant feeling of my mind was removed, I endeavoured to shake off the apathy it had produced, and return to the various occupations and businesses of life. Whatever could divert me from my own dark

memories, or give a momentary motion to the stagnation of my mind, I grasped at with the fondness and eagerness of a child. Thus, you found me surrounding myself with luxuries which palled upon my taste the instant that their novelty had passed: *now* striving for the vanity of literary fame; *now*, for the emptier baubles which riches could procure. At one time I shrouded myself in my closet, and brooded over the dogmas of the learned and the errors of the wise; at another, I plunged into the more engrossing and active pursuits of the living crowd which rolled around me,—and flattered my heart, that amid the applause of senators and the whirlpool of affairs, I could lull to rest the voices of the past and the spectre of the dead.

"Whether these hopes were effectual, and the struggle not in vain, this haggard and wasting form, drooping day by day into the grave, can declare; but I said I would not dwell long upon this part of my history, nor is it necessary. Of one thing only, not connected with the main part of my confessions, it is right, for the sake of one tender and guiltless being, that I should speak.

"In the cold and friendless world with which I mixed, there was a heart which had years ago given itself wholly up to me. At that time I was ignorant of the gift I so little deserved, or (for it was before I knew Gertrude) I might have returned it, and been saved years of crime and anguish. Since then, the person I allude to had married, and, by the death of her husband, was once more free. Intimate with my family, and more especially with my sister, she now met me constantly; her compassion for the change she perceived in me, both in mind and person, was stronger than even her reserve, and this is the only reason why I speak of an attachment which ought otherwise to be concealed: I believe that you already understand to whom I allude, and since you have discovered her weakness, it is right that you should know also her virtue; it is right that you should learn that it was not in her the fantasy or passion of a moment, but a long and secreted love; that you should learn that it was her pity, and no unfeminine disregard to opinion, which betrayed her

into imprudence; and that she is, at this moment, innocent of everything but the folly of loving *me*.

"I pass on to the time when I discovered that I had been either intentionally or unconsciously deceived, and that my enemy yet lived! *lived* in honour, prosperity, and the world's blessings. The information was like removing a barrier from a stream hitherto pent into quiet and restraint. All the stormy thoughts, feelings, and passions so long at rest rushed again into a terrible and tumultuous action. The newly-formed stratum of my mind was swept away; everything seemed a wreck, a chaos, a convulsion of jarring elements; but this is a trite and tame description of my feelings; words would be but commonplace to express the revulsion which I experienced: yet, amidst all, there was one paramount and presiding thought, to which the rest were as atoms in the heap,—the awakened thought of vengeance!—but how was it to be gratified?

"Placed as Tyrrell now was in the scale of society, every method of retribution but the one formerly rejected seemed at an end. To that one, therefore, weak and merciful as it appeared to me, I resorted; you took my challenge to Tyrrell; you remember his behaviour: Conscience doth indeed make cowards of us all! The letter enclosed to me in his to you contained only the commonplace argument urged so often by those who have injured us; namely, the reluctance at attempting our life after having ruined our happiness. When I found that he had left London my rage knew no bounds: I was absolutely frantic with indignation; the earth reeled before my eyes; I was almost suffocated by the violence—the *whirlpool*—of my emotions. I gave myself no time to think,—I left town in pursuit of my foe.

"I found that—still addicted, though, I believed, not so madly as before, to the old amusements—he was in the neighbourhood of Newmarket, awaiting the races shortly to ensue. No sooner did I find his address than I wrote him another challenge, still more forcibly and insultingly worded than the one you took. In this I said that his refusal was of no avail; that I had sworn that my vengeance should over-

take him; and that sooner or later, in the face of heaven and despite of hell, my oath should be fulfilled. Remember those words, Pelham, I shall refer to them hereafter.

"Tyrrell's reply was short and contemptuous: he affected to treat me as a madman. Perhaps (and I confess that the incoherence of my letter authorized such suspicion) he believed I really was one. He concluded by saying that if he received more of my letters, he should shelter himself from my aggressions by the protection of the law.

"On receiving this reply, a stern, sullen, iron spirit entered into my bosom. I betrayed no external mark of passion; I sat down in silence; I placed the letter and Gertrude's picture before me. There, still and motionless, I remained for hours. I remember well I was awakened from my gloomy revery by the clock, as it struck the first hour of the morning. At that lone and ominous sound, the associations of romance and dread which the fables of our childhood connect with it rushed coldly and fearfully into my mind: the damp dews broke out upon my forehead and the blood curdled in my limbs. In that moment I knelt down and vowed a frantic and deadly oath — the words of which I would not now dare to repeat — that before three days expired, hell should no longer be cheated of its prey. I rose, — I flung myself on my bed, *and slept.*

"The next day I left my abode. I purchased a strong and swift horse; and, disguising myself from head to foot in a long horseman's cloak, I set off alone, locking in my heart the calm and cold conviction that my oath should be kept. I placed, concealed in my dress, two pistols; my intention was to follow Tyrrell wherever he went, till we could find ourselves alone, and without the chance of intrusion. It was then my determination to *force* him into a contest, and that no trembling of the hand, no error of the swimming sight, might betray my purpose, to place us foot to foot, and the mouth of each pistol almost to the very temple of each antagonist. Nor was I deterred for a moment from this resolution by the knowledge that my own death must be as certain as my victim's. On the contrary, I looked forward to dying

thus, and so baffling the more lingering, but not less sure, disease which was daily wasting me away, with the same fierce, yet not unquiet delight with which men have rushed into battle, and sought out a death less bitter to them than life.

"For two days, though I each day saw Tyrrell, fate threw into my way no opportunity of executing my design. The morning of the third came,—Tyrrell was on the race-ground; sure that he would remain there for some hours, I put up my wearied horse in the town, and, seating myself in an obscure corner of the course, was contented with watching, as the serpent does his victim, the distant motions of my enemy. Perhaps you can recollect passing a man seated on the ground and robed in a horseman's cloak. I need not tell you that it was I whom you passed and accosted. I saw you ride by me; but the moment you were gone I forgot the occurrence. I looked upon the rolling and distant crowd as a child views the figures of the phantasmagoria, scarcely knowing if my eyes deceived me, feeling impressed with some stupefying and ghastly sensation of dread, and cherishing the conviction that my life was not as the life of the creatures that passed before me.

"The day waned: I went back for my horse; I returned to the course, and, keeping at a distance as little suspicious as possible, followed the motions of Tyrrell. He went back to the town, rested there, repaired to a gaming-table, stayed in it a short time, returned to his inn, and ordered his horse.

"In all these motions I followed the object of my pursuit; and my heart bounded with joy when I at last saw him set out alone and in the advancing twilight. I followed him till he left the main road. Now, I thought, was my time. I redoubled my pace, and had nearly reached him, when some horsemen appearing, constrained me again to slacken my pace. Various other similar interruptions occurred to delay my plot. At length all was undisturbed. I spurred my horse, and was nearly on the heels of my enemy, when I perceived him join another man: this was *you;* I clenched my teeth and drew my breath, as I once more retreated to a distance. In a short time two men passed me, and I found that, owing to some

accident on the road, they stopped to assist you. It appears, by your evidence on a subsequent event, that these men were Thornton and his friend Dawson; at the time they passed too rapidly, and I was too much occupied in my own dark thoughts, to observe them: still I kept up to you and Tyrrell, sometimes catching the outlines of your figures through the moonlight, at others (with the acute sense of anxiety), only just distinguishing the clang of your horses' hoofs on the stony ground. At last a heavy shower came on: imagine my joy when Tyrrell left you and rode off alone!

"I passed you, and followed my enemy as fast as my horse would permit; but it was not equal to Tyrrell's, which was almost at its full speed. However, I came, at last, to a very steep and almost precipitous descent. I was forced to ride slowly and cautiously; this, however, I the less regarded, from my conviction that Tyrrell must be obliged to use the same precaution. My hand was on my pistol with a grasp of premeditated revenge, when a shrill, sharp, solitary cry broke on my ear.

"No sound followed: all was silence. I was just approaching towards the close of the descent, when a horse without its rider passed me. The shower had ceased, and the moon broke from the cloud some minutes before; by its light I recognized the horse rode by Tyrrell; perhaps, I thought, it has thrown its master, and my victim will now be utterly in my power. I pushed hastily forward in spite of the hill, not yet wholly passed. I came to a spot of singular desolation: it was a broad patch of waste land, a pool of water was on the right, and a remarkable and withered tree hung over it. I looked round, but saw nothing of life stirring. A dark and imperfectly developed object lay by the side of the pond; I pressed forward: merciful God! my enemy had escaped my hand, and lay in the stillness of death before me!"

"What!" I exclaimed, interrupting Glanville, for I could contain myself no longer, "it was not by *you* then that Tyrrell fell?" With these words, I grasped his hand; and, excited as I had been by my painful and wrought-up interest in his recital, I burst into tears of gratitude and joy. Reginald

Glanville was innocent: Ellen was not the sister of an assassin!

After a short pause, Glanville continued:—

"I gazed upon the upward and distorted face, in a deep and sickening silence; an awe, dark and undefined, crept over my heart: I stood beneath the solemn and sacred heavens, and felt that the hand of God was upon me; that a mysterious and fearful edict had gone forth; that my headlong and unholy wrath had, in the very midst of its fury, been checked, as if but the idle anger of a child; that the plan I had laid in the foolish wisdom of my heart had been traced, step by step, by an all-seeing eye, and baffled in the moment of its fancied success by an inscrutable and awful doom. I had wished the death of my enemy: lo! my wish was accomplished,—*how*, I neither knew nor guessed; there, a still and senseless clod of earth, without power of offence or injury, he lay beneath my feet: it seemed as if, in the moment of my uplifted arm, the Divine Avenger had asserted His prerogative,—as if the angel which had smitten the Assyrian had again swept forth, though against a meaner victim; and while he punished the guilt of a human criminal, had set an eternal barrier to the vengeance of a human foe!

"I dismounted from my horse, and bent over the murdered man. I drew from my bosom the miniature, which never forsook me, and bathed the lifeless resemblance of Gertrude in the blood of her betrayer. Scarcely had I done so, before my ear caught the sound of steps; hastily I thrust, as I thought, the miniature in my bosom, remounted, and rode hurriedly away. At that hour, and for many which succeeded to it, I believe that all sense was suspended. I was like a man haunted by a dream, and wandering under its influence! or as one whom a spectre pursues, and for whose eye the breathing and busy world is but as a land of unreal forms and flitting shadows, teeming with the monsters of darkness and the terrors of the tomb.

"It was not till the next day that I missed the picture. I returned to the spot; searched it carefully, but in vain; the miniature could not be found: I returned to town, and shortly

Glanville finding the Body of Tyrrell.

afterwards the newspapers informed me of what had subsequently occurred. I saw, with dismay, that all appearances pointed to me as the criminal, and that the officers of justice were at that moment tracing the clew which my cloak and the color of my horse afforded them. My mysterious pursuit of Tyrrell, the disguise I had assumed, the circumstance of my passing you on the road and of my flight when you approached, all spoke volumes against me. A stronger evidence yet remained, and it was reserved for Thornton to indicate it; at this moment my life is in his hands. Shortly after my return to town, he forced his way into my room, shut the door, bolted it, and, the moment we were alone, said, with a savage and fiendish grin of exultation and defiance, 'Sir Reginald Glanville, you have many a time and oft insulted me with your pride, and more with your gifts: now it is my time to insult and triumph over you; know that one word of mine could sentence you to the gibbet.'

"He then minutely summed up the evidence against me, and drew from his pocket the threatening letter I had last written to Tyrrell. You remember that therein I said my vengeance was sworn against him, and that, sooner or later, it should overtake him. 'Couple,' said Thornton, coldly, as he replaced the letter in his pocket,—'couple these words with the evidence already against you, and I would not buy your life at a farthing's value.'

"How Thornton came by this paper, so important to my safety, I know not: but when he read it I was startled by the danger it brought upon me; one glance sufficed to show me that I was utterly at the mercy of the villain who stood before me; he saw and enjoyed my struggles.

"'Now,' said he, 'we know each other: at present I want a thousand pounds; you will not refuse it me, I am sure; when it is gone, I shall call again; till then you can do without me.' I flung him a check for the money, and he departed.

"You may conceive the mortification I endured in this sacrifice of pride to prudence; but those were no ordinary motives which induced me to submit to it. Fast approaching to the grave, it mattered to me but little whether a violent death

should shorten a life to which a limit was already set, and which I was far from being anxious to retain: but I could not endure the thought of bringing upon my mother and my sister the wretchedness and shame which the mere suspicion of a crime so enormous would occasion them; and when my eye caught all the circumstances arrayed against me, my pride seemed to suffer a less mortification even in the course I adopted than in the thought of the felon's gaol and the criminal's trial,—the hoots and execrations of the mob, and the death and ignominious remembrance of the murderer.

"Stronger than either of these motives was my shrinking and loathing aversion to whatever seemed likely to unrip the secret history of the past. I sickened at the thought of Gertrude's name and fate being bared to the vulgar eye, and exposed to the comment, the strictures, the ridicule of the gaping and curious public. It seemed to me, therefore, but a very poor exertion of philosophy to conquer my feelings of humiliation at Thornton's insolence and triumph, and to console myself with the reflection that a few months must rid me alike of his exactions and my life.

"But, of late, Thornton's persecutions and demands have risen to such a height that I have been scarcely able to restrain my indignation and control myself into compliance. The struggle is too powerful for my frame: it is rapidly bringing on the fiercest and the last contest I shall suffer, before 'the wicked shall cease from troubling, and the weary be at rest.' Some days since I came to a resolution, which I am now about to execute: it is to leave this country and take refuge on the Continent. There I shall screen myself from Thornton's pursuit and the danger which it entails upon me; and there, unknown and undisturbed, I shall await the termination of my disease.

"But two duties remained to me to fulfil before I departed: I have now discharged them both. One was due to the warm-hearted and noble being who honoured me with her interest and affection,—the other to you. I went yesterday to the former; I sketched the outline of that history which I have detailed to you. I showed her the waste of my barren heart, and

spoke to her of the disease which was wearing me away. How beautiful is the love of woman! She would have followed me over the world,—received my last sigh, and seen me to the rest I shall find at length; and this without a hope, or thought of recompense, even from the worthlessness of my love.

"But enough!—of her my farewell has been taken. Your suspicions I have seen and forgiven; for they were natural: it was due to me to remove them; the pressure of your hand tells me that I have done so; but I had another reason for my confessions. I have worn away the romance of my heart, and I have now no indulgence for the little delicacies and petty scruples which often stand in the way of our real happiness. I have marked your former addresses to Ellen, and, I confess, with great joy; for I know, amidst all your worldly ambition and the encrusted artificiality of your exterior, how warm and generous is your real heart,—how noble and intellectual is your real mind: and were my sister tenfold more perfect than I believe her, I do not desire to find on earth one more deserving of her than yourself. I have remarked your late estrangement from Ellen; and while I *guessed*, I felt that, however painful to me, I ought to *remove*, the cause: she loves you—though perhaps you know it not—much and truly; and since my earlier life has been passed in a selfish inactivity, I would fain let it close with the reflection of having served two beings whom I prize so dearly, and the hope that their happiness will commence with my death.

"And now, Pelham, I have done; I am weak and exhausted, and cannot bear more—even of your society, now. Think over what I have last said, and let me see you again to-morrow: on the day after, I leave England forever."

CHAPTER LXXVI.

. . . . .

But wilt thou accept not
The worship the heart lifts above,
And the Heavens reject not?
The desire of the moth for the star,
Of the night for the morrow,
The devotion to something afar
From the sphere of our sorrow? — P. B. Shelley.

It was not with a light heart, — for I loved Glanville too well not to be powerfully affected by his awful history, — but with a chastised and sober joy, that I now beheld my friend innocent of the guilt of which my suspicions had accused him, while the only obstacle to my marriage with his sister was removed. True it was that the sword yet hung over his head, and that while he lived there could be no rational assurance of his safety from the disgrace and death of the felon. In the world's eye, therefore, the barrier to my union with Ellen would have been far from being wholly removed; but at that moment my disappointments had disgusted me with the world, and I turned with a double yearning of heart to her whose pure and holy love could be at once my recompense and retreat.

Nor was this selfish consideration my only motive in the conduct I was resolved to adopt; on the contrary, it was scarcely more prominent in my mind than those derived from giving to a friend who was now dearer to me than ever his only consolation on this earth, and to Ellen the safest protection in case of any danger to her brother. With these, it is true, were mingled feelings which, in happier circumstances, might have been those of transport at a bright and successful termination to a deep and devoted love; but these I had, while Glanville's very life was so doubtful, little right to indulge, and I checked them as soon as they arose.

After a sleepless night I repaired to Lady Glanville's house. It was long since I had been there, and the servant who admitted me seemed somewhat surprised at the earliness of my visit. I desired to see the mother, and waited in the parlour till she came. I made but a scanty exordium to my speech. In very few words I expressed my love to Ellen, and besought her mediation in my behalf; nor did I think it would be a slight consideration in my favour with the fond mother, to mention Glanville's approbation of my suit.

"Ellen is upstairs in the drawing-room," said Lady Glanville. "I will go and prepare her to receive you: if you have her consent, you have mine."

"Will you suffer me, then," said I, "to forestall you? Forgive my impatience, and let me see her before you do."

Lady Glanville was a woman of the good old school, and stood somewhat upon forms and ceremonies. I did not, therefore, await the answer, which I foresaw might not be favourable to my success, but with my customary assurance left the room and hastened upstairs. I entered the drawing-room, and shut the door. Ellen was at the far end; and as I entered with a light step she did not perceive me till I was close by.

She started when she saw me; and her cheek, before very pale, deepened into crimson. "Good heavens! is it you?" she said falteringly. "I — I thought — but — but excuse me for an instant, I will call my mother."

"Stay for one instant, I beseech you: it is from your mother that I come; she has referred me to you." And with a trembling and hurried voice, for all my usual boldness forsook me, I poured forth, in rapid and burning words, the history of my secret and hoarded love, — its doubts, fears, and hopes.

Ellen sank back on her chair, overpowered and silent by her feelings and the vehemence of my own. I knelt and took her hand; I covered it with my kisses; it was not withdrawn from them. I raised my eyes, and beheld in hers all that my heart had hoped, but did not dare to portray.

"You — you," said she, when at last she found words, — "I imagined that you only thought of ambition and the world: I

could not have dreamt of this." She ceased, blushing and embarrassed.

"It is true," said I, "that you had a right to think so, for, till this moment, I have never opened to you even a glimpse of my veiled heart, and its secret and wild desires; but do you think that my love was the less a treasure because it was hidden? or the less deep because it was cherished at the bottom of my soul? No — no; believe me, *that* love was not to be mingled with the ordinary objects of life; it was too pure to be profaned by the levities and follies which are all of my nature that I have permitted myself to develop to the world. Do not imagine that, because I have seemed an idler with the idle, — selfish with the interested, — and cold, and vain, and frivolous with those to whom such qualities were both a passport and a virtue; do not imagine that I have concealed within me nothing more worthy of you and of myself: my very love for you shows that I am wiser and better than I have seemed. Speak to me, Ellen, — may I call you by that name, — one word, — one syllable! speak to me, and tell me that you have read my heart, and that you will not reject it!"

There came no answer from those dear lips; but their soft and tender smile told me that I might hope. That hour I still recall and bless! that hour was the happiest of my life.

CHAPTER LXXVII.

A THOUSAND crowns, or else lay down your head. — *2d Part of Henry VI.*

FROM Ellen I hastened to the house of Sir Reginald. The hall was in all the confusion of approaching departure. I sprang over the paraphernalia of books and boxes which obstructed my way, and bounded up the stairs. Glanville was, as usual, alone; his countenance was less pale than it had

been lately, and when I saw it brighten as I approached, I hoped, in the new happiness of my heart, that he might baffle both his enemy and his disease.

I told him all that had just occurred between Ellen and myself. "And now," said I, as I clasped his hand, "I have a proposal to make, to which you must accede: let me accompany you abroad; I will go with you to whatever corner of the world you may select. We will plan together every possible method of concealing our retreat. Upon the past I will never speak to you. In your hours of solitude I will never disturb you by an unwelcome and ill-timed sympathy. I will tend upon you, watch over you, bear with you, with more than the love and tenderness of a brother. You shall see me only when you wish it. Your loneliness shall never be invaded. When you get better, as I presage you will, I will leave you to come back to England and provide for the worst by insuring your sister a protector. I will then return to you alone, that your seclusion may not be endangered by the knowledge even of Ellen, and you shall have me by your side till — till — "

"The last!" interrupted Glanville. "Too — too — generous Pelham, I feel — these tears (the first I have shed for a long, long time) tell you, that I feel to the heart — your friendship and disinterested attachment; but in the moment your love for Ellen has become successful, I will not tear you from its enjoyment. Believe me, all that I could derive from your society could not afford me half the happiness I should have in knowing that you and Ellen were blessed in each other. No — no, my solitude will at that reflection be deprived of its sting. You shall hear from me once again; my letter shall contain a request, and your executing that last favour must console and satisfy the kindness of your heart. For myself, I shall die as I have lived, — *alone*. All fellowship with my griefs would seem to me strange and unwelcome."

I would not suffer Glanville to proceed. I interrupted him with fresh arguments and entreaties, to which he seemed at last to submit, and I was in the firm hope of having con-

quered his determination, when we were startled by a sudden and violent noise in the hall.

"It is Thornton," said Glanville, calmly. "I told them not to admit him, and he is forcing his way."

Scarcely had Sir Reginald said this, before Thornton burst abruptly into the room.

Although it was scarcely noon, he was more than half intoxicated, and his eyes swam in his head with a maudlin expression of triumph and insolence as he rolled towards us.

"Oh, oh! Sir Reginald," he said, "thought of giving me the slip, eh? Your d—d servants said you were out; but I soon silenced them. Egad, I made them as nimble as cows in a cage; I have not learnt the use of my fists for nothing. So, you 're going abroad to-morrow; without my leave, too,—pretty good joke that, indeed. Come, come, my brave fellow, you need not scowl at me in that way. Why, you look as surly as a butcher's dog with a broken head."

Glanville, who was livid with ill-suppressed rage, rose haughtily.

"Mr. Thornton," he said, in a calm voice, although he was trembling, in his extreme passion, from head to foot, "I am not now prepared to submit to your insolence and intrusion. You will leave this room instantly. If you have any further demands upon me I will hear them to-night, at any hour you please to appoint."

"No, no, my fine fellow," said Thornton, with a coarse chuckle; "you have as much wit as three folks,—two fools and a madman; but you won't *do me*, for all that. The instant my back is turned, yours will be turned too; and by the time I call again, your honour will be half way to Calais. But—bless my stars, Mr. Pelham, is that you? I really did not see you before; I suppose you are not in the secret?"

"I have *no* secrets from Mr. Pelham," said Glanville; "nor do I care if you discuss the whole of your nefarious transactions with me in his presence. Since you doubt my word, it is beneath my dignity to vindicate it, and your business can as well be despatched now as hereafter. You have heard

rightly that I intend leaving England to-morrow; and now, sir, what is your will?"

"By G—, Sir Reginald Glanville!" exclaimed Thornton, who seemed stung to the quick by Glanville's contemptuous coldness, "you shall *not* leave England without my leave. Ay, you may frown, but I say you shall not; nay, you shall not budge a foot from this very room unless I cry, 'Be it so!'"

Glanville could no longer restrain himself. He would have sprung towards Thornton, but I seized and arrested him. I read, in the malignant and incensed countenance of his persecutor, all the danger to which a single imprudence would have exposed him, and I trembled for his safety.

I whispered, as I forced him again to his seat, "Leave me alone to settle with this man, and I will endeavour to free you from him." I did not tarry for his answer, but, turning to Thornton, said to him coolly but civilly, "Sir Reginald Glanville has acquainted me with the nature of your very extraordinary demands upon him. Did he adopt my advice, he would immediately place the affair in the hands of his legal advisers. His ill-health, however, his anxiety to leave England, and his wish to sacrifice almost everything to quiet, induce him, rather than take this alternative, to silence your importunities by acceding to claims however illegal and unjust. If, therefore, you now favour Sir Reginald with your visit for the purpose of making a demand previous to his quitting England, and which, consequently, will be the last to which he will concede, you will have the goodness to name the amount of your claim, and should it be reasonable, I think Sir Reginald will authorize me to say that it shall be granted."

"Well, now!" cried Thornton, "that's what I call talking like a sensible man; and though I am not fond of speaking to a third person, when the principal is present, yet as you have always been very civil to me, I have no objection to treating with you. Please to give Sir Reginald this paper: if he will but take the trouble to sign it, he may go to the Falls of Niagara for me! I won't interrupt him; so he had better put pen to paper, and get rid of me at once, for I know that I am as welcome as snow in harvest."

I took the paper, which was folded up, and gave it to Glanville, who leaned back on his chair, half exhausted by rage. He glanced his eye over it, and then tore it into a thousand pieces, and trampled it beneath his feet: "Go!" exclaimed he, "go, rascal, and do your worst! I will not make myself a beggar to enrich you. My whole fortune would but answer this demand."

"Do as you please, Sir Reginald," answered Thornton, grinning, "do as you please. It 's not a long walk from hence to Bow Street, nor a long swing from Newgate to the gallows; do as you please, Sir Reginald, do as you please!" and the villain flung himself at full length on the ottoman, and eyed Glanville's countenance with a malicious and easy effrontery, which seemed to say, "I know you will struggle, but you cannot help yourself."

I took Glanville aside: "My dear friend," said I, "believe me that I share your indignation to the utmost; but we must do anything rather than incense this wretch: what is his demand?"

"I speak literally," replied Glanville, "when I say that it covers nearly the whole of my fortune, except such lands as are entailed upon the male heir; for my habits of extravagance have very much curtailed my means: it is the exact sum I had set apart for a marriage gift to my sister, in addition to her own fortune."

"Then," said I, "you shall give it him; your sister has no longer any necessity for a portion: her marriage with me prevents *that* — and with regard to yourself, your wants are not many — such as it is, you can share *my* fortune."

"No — no — no!" cried Glanville; and his generous nature lashing him into fresh rage, he broke from my grasp, and moved menacingly to Thornton. That person still lay on the ottoman, regarding us with an air half-contemptuous, half-exulting.

"Leave the room instantly," said Glanville, "or you will repent it!"

"What! another murder, Sir Reginald!" said Thornton. "No, I am not a sparrow, to have my neck wrenched by a

woman's hand like yours. Give me my demand,—sign the paper, and I will leave you for ever and a day."

"I will commit no such folly," answered Glanville. "If you will accept five thousand pounds, you shall have that sum; but were the rope on my neck, you should not wring from me a farthing more!"

"Five thousand!" repeated Thornton; "a mere drop, a child's toy,—why, you are playing with me, Sir Reginald; nay, I am a reasonable man, and will abate a trifle or so of my just claims. But you must not take advantage of my good-nature. Make me snug and easy for life,—let me keep a brace of hunters, a cosy box, a bit of land to it, and a girl after my own heart, and I 'll say quits with you. Now, Mr. Pelham, who is a long-headed gentleman, and does not *spit on his own blanket,* knows well enough that one can't do all this for five thousand pounds; make it a thousand a year,—that is, give me a cool twenty thousand,—and I won't exact another sou. Egad, this drinking makes one deuced thirsty: Mr. Pelham, just reach me that glass of water; *I hear bees in my head!*"

Seeing that I did not stir, Thornton rose, with an oath against pride; and swaggering towards the table, took up a tumbler of water, which happened accidentally to be there: close by it was the picture of the ill-fated Gertrude. The gambler, who was evidently so intoxicated as to be scarcely conscious of his motions or words (otherwise, in all probability, he would, to borrow from himself a proverb illustrative of his profession, have played his cards better), took up the portrait.

Glanville saw the action, and was by his side in an instant. "Touch it not with your accursed hands!" he cried in an ungovernable fury. "Leave your hold this instant, or I will dash you to pieces."

Thornton kept a firm gripe of the picture. "Here 's a to-do!" said he, tauntingly: "was there ever such work about a poor —— (using a word too coarse for repetition) before?"

The word had scarcely passed his lips, when he was stretched at his full length upon the ground. Nor did Glanville stop

there. With all the strength of his nervous frame, fully requited for the debility of disease by the fury of the moment, he seized the gamester as if he had been an infant, and dragged him to the door: the next moment I heard his heavy frame rolling down the stairs with no decorous slowness of descent.

Glanville reappeared. "Good heavens!" I cried, "what have you done?" But he was too lost in his still unappeased rage to heed me. He leaned, panting and breathless, against the wall, with clenched teeth and a flashing eye, rendered more terribly bright by the feverish lustre natural to his disease.

Presently I heard Thornton reascend the stairs; he opened the door, and entered but one pace. Never did human face wear a more fiendish expression of malevolence and wrath. "Sir Reginald Glanville," he said, "I thank you heartily. He must have iron nails who scratches a bear. You have sent me a challenge, and the hangman shall bring you my answer. Good day, Sir Reginald,—good day, Mr. Pelham;" and so saying, he shut the door, and, rapidly descending the stairs, was out of the house in an instant.

"There is no time to be lost," said I; "order posthorses to your carriage, and be gone instantly."

"You are wrong," replied Glanville, slowly recovering himself. "I must not fly: it would be worse than useless; it would seem the strongest argument against me. Remember that if Thornton has really gone to inform against me, the officers of justice would arrest me long before I reached Calais; or even if I did elude their pursuit so far, I should be as much in their power in France as in England: but to tell you the truth, I do not think Thornton *will* inform. Money, to a temper like his, is a stronger temptation than revenge; and before he has been three minutes in the air, he will perceive the folly of losing the golden harvest he may yet make of me, for the sake of a momentary passion. No: my best plan will be to wait here till to-morrow, as I originally intended. In the meanwhile he will, in all probability, pay me another visit, and I will make a compromise with his demands."

Despite my fears, I could not but see the justice of these observations, the more especially as a still stronger argument than any urged by Glanville forced itself on my mind: this was my internal conviction that Thornton himself was guilty of the murder of Tyrrell, and that, therefore, he would, for his own sake, avoid the new and particularizing scrutiny into that dreadful event, which his accusation of Glanville would necessarily occasion.

Both of us were wrong. Villains have passions as well as honest men; and they will, therefore, forfeit their own interest in obedience to those passions, while the calculations of prudence invariably suppose that that interest is their *only* rule.

Glanville was so enfeebled by his late excitement that he besought me once more to leave him to himself. I did so, under a promise that he would admit me again in the evening; for notwithstanding my persuasion that Thornton would not put his threats into execution, I could not conquer a latent foreboding of dread and evil.

CHAPTER LXXVIII.

AWAY with him to prison — where is the provost? — *Measure for Measure.*

I RETURNED home, perplexed by a thousand contradictory thoughts upon the scene I had just witnessed: the more I reflected the more I regretted the fatality of the circumstances that had tempted Glanville to accede to Thornton's demand. True it was that Thornton's self-regard might be deemed a sufficient guarantee for his concealment of such extortionate transactions: moreover it was difficult to say, when the formidable array of appearances against Glanville was considered, whether any other line of conduct than that which he had adopted could, with safety, have been pursued.

His feelings, too, with regard to the unfortunate Gertrude, I could fully enter into and sympathize with; but, in spite of all these considerations, it was with an inexpressible aversion that I contemplated the idea of that tacit confession of guilt which his compliance with Thornton's exactions so unhappily implied; it was, therefore, a thought of some satisfaction that my rash and hasty advice, of a still further concession to those extortions, had not been acceded to. My present intention, in the event of Glanville's persevering to reject my offer of accompanying him, was to remain in England for the purpose of sifting the murder; nor did I despair of accomplishing this most desirable end, through the means of Dawson; for there was but little doubt in my own mind that Thornton and himself were the murderers, and I hoped that address or intimidation might win a confession from Dawson, although it might probably be unavailing with his hardened and crafty associate.

Occupied with these thoughts, I endeavoured to while away the hours till the evening summoned me once more to the principal object of my reflections. The instant Glanville's door was opened, I saw, by one glance, that I had come too late: the whole house was in confusion; several of the servants were in the hall, conferring with each other, with that mingled mystery and agitation which always accompany the fears and conjectures of the lower classes. I took aside the valet, who had lived with Glanville for some years, and who was remarkably attached to his master, and learned that, somewhat more than an hour before, Mr. Thornton had returned to the house, accompanied by three men of very suspicious appearance. "In short, sir," said the man, lowering his voice to a whisper, "I knew one of them by sight; he was Mr. S——, the Bow Street officer; with these men, Sir Reginald left the house, merely saying, in his usual quiet manner, that he did not know when he should return."

I concealed my perturbation, and endeavoured, as far as I was able, to quiet the evident apprehensions of the servant. "At all events, Seymour," said I, "I know that I may trust you sufficiently to warn you against mentioning the circum-

stance any further; above all, let me beg of you to stop the mouths of those idle loiterers in the hall,—and be sure that you do not give any unnecessary alarm to Lady and Miss Glanville."

The poor man promised, with tears in his eyes, that he would obey my injunctions; and with a calm face but a sickening heart, I turned away from the house. I knew not whither to direct my wanderings; fortunately, I recollected that I should, in all probability, be among the first witnesses summoned on Glanville's examination, and that, perhaps, by the time I reached home I might already receive an intimation to that effect; accordingly I retraced my steps, and on re-entering my hotel was told by the waiter, with a mysterious air, that a gentleman was waiting to see me. Seated by a window in my room, and wiping his forehead with a red silk pocket-handkerchief, was a short, thick-set man, with a fiery and rugose complexion, not altogether unlike the aspect of a mulberry: from underneath a pair of shaggy brows peeped two singularly small eyes, which made ample amends, by their fire, for their deficiency in size; they were black, brisk, and somewhat fierce in their expression. A nose of that shape vulgarly termed bottled, formed the "arch sublime," the bridge, the twilight as it were, between the purple sunset of one cheek and the glowing sunrise of the other. His mouth was small, and drawn up at each corner, like a purse, —there was something sour and crabbed about it; if it *was* like a purse, it was the purse of a miser: a fair round chin had not been condemned to single blessedness,—on the contrary, it was like a farmer's pillion, and carried double: on either side of a very low forehead, hedged round by closely-mowed bristles of a dingy black, was an enormous ear, of the same intensely rubicund colour as that inflamed pendant of flesh which adorns the throat of an enraged turkey-cock; ears so large, and so red, I never beheld before,—they were something preposterous!

This enchanting figure, which was attired in a sober suit of leaden black, relieved by a long gold watch-chain and a plentiful decoration of seals, rose at my entrance, with a sol-

emn grunt and a still more solemn bow. I shut the door carefully, and asked him his business. As I had foreseen, it was a request from the magistrate at ——, to attend a private examination on the ensuing day.

"Sad thing, sir, sad thing," said Mr.——; "it would be quite shocking to hang a gentleman of Sir Reginald Glanville's quality,—so distinguished an orator, too; sad thing, sir,—very sad thing."

"Oh!" said I, quietly, "there is not a doubt as to Sir Reginald's innocence of the crime laid to him; and, probably, Mr. ——, I may call in your assistance to-morrow, to ascertain the real murderers: I think I am possessed of some clew."

Mr. —— pricked up his ears,—those enormous ears! "Sir," he said, "I shall be happy to accompany you,—very happy; give me the clew you speak of, and I will soon find the villains. Horrid thing, sir, murder,—very horrid. It is too hard that a gentleman cannot take his ride home from a race or a merry-making, but he must have his throat cut from ear to ear,—ear to ear, sir;" and with these words, the speaker's own auricular protuberances seemed, as in conscious horror, to glow with a double carnation.

"Very true, Mr. ——!" said I; "say I will certainly attend the examination,—till then, good-by!" At this hint, my fiery-faced friend made a low bow, and blazed out of the room, like the ghost of a kitchen fire.

Left to myself, I revolved, earnestly and anxiously, every circumstance that could tend to diminish the appearances against Glanville, and direct suspicion to that quarter where I was confident the guilt rested. In this endeavour, I passed the time till morning, when I fell into an uneasy slumber, which lasted some hours; on waking, it was almost time to attend the magistrate's appointment. I dressed hastily, and soon found myself in the room of inquisition.

It is impossible to conceive a more courteous and yet more equitable man than the magistrate whom I had the honour of attending. He spoke with great feeling on the subject for which I was summoned, owned to me that Thornton's state-

ment was very clear and forcible, trusted that my evidence would contradict an account which he was very loth to believe, and then proceeded to the question. I saw, with an agony which I can scarcely express, that all my answers made powerfully against the cause I endeavoured to support. I was obliged to own that a man on horseback passed me soon after Tyrrell had quitted me; that, on coming to the spot where the deceased was found, I saw this same horseman on the very place; that I believed, nay, that I was sure (how could I evade this ?) that this man was Reginald Glanville.

Further evidence Thornton had already offered to adduce. He could prove that the said horseman had been mounted on a gray horse, sold to a person answering exactly to the description of Sir Reginald Glanville; moreover, that that horse was yet in the stables of the prisoner. He produced a letter, which, he said, he had found upon the person of the deceased, signed by Sir Reginald Glanville, and containing the most deadly threats against Sir John Tyrrell's life: and, to crown all, he called upon me to witness that we had both discovered, upon the spot where the murder was committed, a picture belonging to the prisoner, since restored to him and now in his possession.

At the close of this examination the worthy magistrate shook his head in evident distress. "I have known Sir Reginald Glanville personally," said he: "in private as in public life, I have always thought him the most upright and honourable of men. I feel the greatest pain in saying that it will be my duty fully to commit him for trial."

I interrupted the magistrate; I demanded that Dawson should be produced. "I have already," said he, "inquired of Thornton respecting that person, whose testimony is of evident importance; he tells me that Dawson has left the country, and can give me no clew to his address."

"He lies!" cried I, in the abrupt anguish of my heart; "his associate *shall* be produced. Hear me; I have been, next to Thornton, the chief witness against the prisoner, and when I swear to you that, in spite of all appearances, I most solemnly believe in his innocence, you may rely on my assur-

ance that there are circumstances in his favour which have not yet been considered, but which I will pledge myself hereafter to adduce." I then related to the private ear of the magistrate my firm conviction of the guilt of the accuser himself. I dwelt forcibly upon the circumstance of Tyrrell's having mentioned to me that Thornton was aware of the large sum he had on his person, and of the strange disappearance of that sum when his body was examined in the fatal field. After noting how impossible it was that Glanville could have stolen the money, I insisted strongly on the distressed circumstances, the dissolute habits, and the hardened character, of Thornton; I recalled to the mind of the magistrate the singularity of Thornton's absence from home when I called there, and the doubtful nature of his excuse; much more I said, but all equally in vain. The only point where I was successful was in pressing for a delay, which was granted to the passionate manner in which I expressed my persuasion that I could confirm my suspicions by much stronger data before the reprieve expired.

"It is very true," said the righteous magistrate, "that there are appearances somewhat against the witness; but certainly not tantamount to anything above a slight suspicion. If, however, you positively think you can ascertain any facts to elucidate this mysterious crime, and point the inquiries of justice to another quarter, I will so far strain the question as to remand the prisoner to another day,—let us say the day after to-morrow. If nothing important can before then be found in his favour, he *must* be committed for trial."

CHAPTER LXXIX.

Nihil est furacius illo:
Non fuit Autolyci tam piceata manus. — Martial.

Quo teneam vultus mutantem Protea nodo? — Horace.

When I left the magistrate I knew not whither my next step should tend. There was, however, no time to indulge the idle stupor which Glanville's situation at first occasioned; with a violent effort I shook it off, and bent all my mind to discover the best method to avail myself, to the utmost, of the short reprieve I had succeeded in obtaining. At length, one of those sudden thoughts, which, from their suddenness, appear more brilliant than they really are, flashed upon my mind. I remembered the accomplished character of Mr. Job Jonson, and the circumstance of my having seen him in company with Thornton. Now, although it was not very likely that Thornton should have made Mr. Jonson his confidant in any of those affairs which it was so essentially his advantage to confine exclusively to himself, yet the acuteness and penetration visible in the character of the worthy Job might not have lain so fallow during his companionship with Thornton but that it might have made some discoveries which would considerably assist me in my researches; besides, as it is literally true in the systematized roguery of London that "birds of a feather flock together," it was by no means unlikely that the honest Job might be honoured with the friendship of Mr. Dawson as well as the company of Mr. Thornton; in which case I looked forward with greater confidence to the detection of the notable pair.

I could not, however, conceal from myself that this was but a very unstable and ill-linked chain of reasoning, and there were moments when the appearances against Glanville wore so close a semblance of truth that all my friendship

could scarcely drive from my mind an intrusive suspicion that he might have deceived me and that the accusation might not be groundless.

This unwelcome idea did not, however, at all lessen the rapidity with which I hastened towards the memorable gin-shop, where I had whilom met Mr. Gordon; there I hoped to find either the address of that gentleman or of the "Club" to which he had taken me in company with Tringle and Dartmore; either at this said club, or of that said gentleman, I thought it not unlikely that I might hear some tidings of the person of Mr. Job Jonson; if not, I was resolved to return to the office, and employ Mr. ——, my mulberry-cheeked acquaintance of the last night, in search after the holy Job.

Fate saved me a world of trouble: as I was hastily walking onwards, I happened to turn my eyes on the opposite side of the way, and discovered a man dressed in what the newspapers term the very height of fashion; namely, in the most ostentatious attire that ever flaunted at Margate, or blazed in the Palais Royal. The nether garments of this *petit-maître* consisted of a pair of blue tight pantaloons, profusely braided, and terminating in Hessian boots, adorned with brass spurs of the most burnished resplendency; a black velvet waistcoat, studded with gold stars, was *backed* by a green frock-coat, covered, notwithstanding the heat of the weather, with fur, and frogged and *cordonné* with the most lordly indifference both as to taste and expense; a small French hat, which might not have been much too large for my lord of ——, was set jauntily in the centre of a system of long black curls, which my eye, long accustomed to penetrate the arcana of habilatory art, discovered at once to be a wig. A fierce black moustachio, very much curled, wandered lovingly from the upper lip towards the eyes, which had an unfortunate prepossession for eccentricity in their direction. To complete the picture, we must suppose some colouring, and this consisted in a very nice and delicate touch of the *rouge* pot, which could not be called by so harsh a term as paint; say rather that it was a *tinge!*

No sooner had I set my eyes upon this figure than I crossed

over to the side of the way which it was adorning, and followed its motions at a respectful but observant distance.

At length my *freluquet* marched into a jeweller's shop in Oxford Street; with a careless air, I affected, two minutes afterwards, to saunter into the same shop; the shopman was showing his *bijouterie* to him of the Hessians with the greatest respect; and, beguiled by the splendour of the wig and waistcoat, turned me over to his apprentice. Another time I might have been indignant at perceiving that the *air noble*, on which I so much piqued myself, was by no means so universally acknowledged as I had vainly imagined: at that moment I was too occupied to think of my insulted dignity. While I was pretending to appear wholly engrossed with some seals, I kept a vigilant eye on my superb fellow-customer; at last, I saw him secrete a diamond ring, and thrust it, by a singular movement of the forefinger, up the fur cuff of his capacious sleeve; presently some other article of minute size disappeared in the like manner.

The *gentleman* then rose, expressed himself *very well satisfied* by the great taste of the jeweller, said he should look in again on Saturday, when he hoped the set he had ordered would be completed, and gravely took his departure amidst the prodigal bows of the shopman and his helpmates. Meanwhile, I bought a seal of small value, and followed my old acquaintance; for the reader has doubtless discovered, long before this, that *the gentleman* was no other than Mr. Job Jonson.

Slowly and struttingly did the man of two virtues perform the whole pilgrimage of Oxford Street. He stopped at Cumberland Gate, and looking round, with an air of gentlemanlike indecision, seemed to consider whether or not he should join the loungers in the park: fortunately for the well-bred set, his doubts terminated in their favour, and Mr. Job Jonson entered the park. Every one happened to be thronging to Kensington Gardens, and the man of two virtues accordingly cut across the park as the shortest, but the least frequented way thither, in order to confer upon the seekers of pleasure the dangerous honour of his company.

As soon as I perceived that there were but few persons in the immediate locality to observe me, and that those consisted of a tall guardsman and his wife, a family of young children with their nurserymaid, and a debilitated East-India captain, walking for the sake of his liver, I overtook the incomparable Job, made him a low bow, and thus reverently accosted him,—

"Mr. Jonson, I am delighted once more to meet you; suffer me to remind you of the very pleasant morning I passed with you in the neighbourhood of Hampton Court. I perceive, by your moustachios and military dress, that you have entered the army since that day; I congratulate the British troops on so admirable an acquisition."

Mr. Jonson's assurance forsook him for a moment, but he lost no time in regaining a quality which was so natural to his character. He assumed a fierce look, and, *relevant sa moustache, sourit amèrement,* like Voltaire's governor.[1] "D— me, sir," he cried, "do you mean to insult me? I know none of your Mr. Jonsons, and I never set my eyes upon you before."

"Look ye, my dear Mr. Job Jonson," replied I, "as I can prove not only all I say, but much more that I shall not say, —such as your little mistakes just now, at the jeweller's shop in Oxford Street, etc., perhaps it would be better for you not to oblige me to create a mob, and give you in charge—pardon my abruptness of speech—*to a constable!* Surely there will be no need of such a disagreeable occurrence, when I assure you, in the first place, that I perfectly forgive you for ridding me of the unnecessary comforts of a pocket-book and handkerchief, the unphilosophical appendage of a purse, and the effeminate love-token of a gold locket. Nor is this all; it is perfectly indifferent to me whether you levy contributions on jewellers or gentlemen, and I am very far from wishing to intrude upon your harmless occupations, or to interfere with your innocent amusements. I see, Mr. Jonson, that you are beginning to understand me; let me facilitate so desirable an end by an additional information,

[1] Don Ferdinand d'Ibarra, in the "Candide."

that, since it is preceded with a promise to open my purse, may tend somewhat to open your heart; I am at this moment in great want of your assistance; favour me with it, and I will pay you to your soul's content. Are we friends now, Mr. Job Jonson?"

My old friend burst out into a loud laugh. "Well, sir, I must say that your frankness enchants me. I can no longer dissemble with you; indeed, I perceive it would be useless: besides, I always adored candour; it is my favourite virtue. Tell me how I can help you, and you may command my services."

"One word," said I: "will you be open and ingenuous with me? I shall ask you certain questions, not in the least affecting your own safety, but to which, if you would serve me, you must give me (and, since candour is your favourite virtue, this will be no difficult task) your most candid replies. To strengthen you in so righteous a course, know also that the said replies will come verbatim before a court of law, and that, therefore, it will be a matter of prudence to shape them as closely to the truth as your inclinations will allow. To counterbalance this information, which I own is not very inviting, I repeat that the questions asked you will be wholly foreign to your own affairs, and that, should you prove of that assistance to me which I anticipate, I will so testify my gratitude as to place you beyond the necessity of pillaging rural young gentlemen and credulous shopkeepers for the future; all your present pursuits need thenceforth only be carried on for your private amusement."

"I repeat that you may command me," returned Mr. Jonson, gracefully putting his hand to his heart.

"Pray, then," said I, "to come at once to the point, how long have you been acquainted with Mr. Thomas Thornton?"

"For some months only," returned Job, without the least embarrassment.

"And Mr. Dawson?" said I.

A slight change came over Jonson's countenance; he hesitated. "Excuse me, sir," said he; "but I am, really, perfectly unacquainted with you, and I may be falling into some

trap of the law, of which, Heaven knows, I am as ignorant as a babe unborn."

I saw the knavish justice of this remark; and in my predominating zeal to serve Glanville, I looked upon the *inconvenience* of discovering myself to a pickpocket and sharper as a consideration not worth attending to. In order, therefore, to remove his doubts, and at the same time to have a more secret and undisturbed place for our conference, I proposed to him to accompany me home. At first Mr. Jonson demurred, but I soon half persuaded and half intimidated him into compliance.

Not particularly liking to be publicly seen with a person of his splendid description and celebrated character, I made him walk before me to Mivart's, and I followed him closely, never turning my eye either to the right or the left, lest he should endeavour to escape me. There was no fear of this, for Mr. Jonson was both a bold and a crafty man; and it required, perhaps, but little of his penetration to discover that I was no officer or informer, and that my communication had been of a nature likely enough to terminate in his advantage; there was, therefore, but little need of his courage in accompanying me to my hotel.

There were a good many foreigners of rank at Mivart's, and the waiters took my companion for an ambassador at least: he received their homage with the mingled dignity and condescension natural to so great a man.

As the day was now far advanced, I deemed it but hospitable to offer Mr. Job Jonson some edible refreshment. With the frankness on which he so justly valued himself, he accepted my proposal. I ordered some cold meat and two bottles of wine; and, mindful of old maxims, deferred my business till his repast was over. I conversed with him merely upon ordinary topics, and, at another time, should have been much amused by the singular mixture of impudence and shrewdness which formed the stratum of his character.

At length his appetite was satisfied, and one of the bottles emptied; with the other before him, his body easily reclining

on my library chair, his eyes apparently cast downwards, but ever and anon glancing up at my countenance with a searching and curious look, Mr. Job Jonson prepared himself for our conference; accordingly I began:—

"You say that you *are* acquainted with Mr. Dawson; where is he at present?"

"I don't know," answered Jonson, laconically.

"Come," said I, "no trifling; if you do not know, you can learn."

"Possibly I can, in the course of time," rejoined honest Job.

"If you cannot tell me his residence at once," said I, "our conference is at an end; that is a leading feature in my inquiries."

Jonson paused before he replied,—"You have spoken to me frankly, let us do nothing by halves; tell me, at once, the nature of the service I can do you, and the amount of my reward, and then you shall have my answer. With respect to Dawson, I will confess to you that I did once know him well, and that we have done many a mad prank together, which I should not like the bugaboos and bulkies to know; you will, therefore, see that I am naturally reluctant to tell you anything about him, unless your honour will inform me of the why and the wherefore."

I was somewhat startled by this speech, and by the shrewd cunning eye which dwelt upon me as it was uttered; but, however, I was by no means sure that acceding to his proposal would not be my readiest and wisest way to the object I had in view. Nevertheless, there were some preliminary questions to be got over first: perhaps Dawson might be too dear a friend to the candid Job for the latter to endanger his safety; or perhaps (and this was more probable) Jonson might be perfectly ignorant of anything likely to aid me; in this case my communication would be useless; accordingly I said, after a short consideration,—

"Patience, my dear Mr. Jonson,—patience: you shall know all in good time: meanwhile I must—even for Dawson's sake—question you blindfold. What, now, if your poor

friend Dawson were in imminent danger, and you had, if it so pleased you, the power to save him, would you not do all you could?"

The small coarse features of Mr. Job grew blank with a curious sort of disappointment: "Is that all?" said he. "No! unless I were well paid for my pains in his behalf, he might go to Botany Bay for all I care."

"What!" I cried, in a tone of reproach, "is this your friendship? I thought, just now, that you said Dawson had been an old and firm associate of yours."

"An old one, your honour, but not a firm one. A short time ago I was in great distress, and he and Thornton had, deuce knows how, about two thousand between them; but I could not worm a stiver out of Dawson,—that gripe-all, Thornton, got it all from him."

"Two thousand pounds!" said I, in a calm voice, though my heart beat violently; "that's a great sum for a poor fellow like Dawson. How long ago is it since he had it?"

"About two or three months," answered Jonson.

"Pray," I asked, "have you seen much of Dawson lately?"

"I have," replied Jonson.

"Indeed!" said I. "I thought you told me, just now, that you were unacquainted with his residence?"

"So I am," replied Jonson, coldly; "it is not at his own house that I ever see him."

I was silent, for I was now rapidly and minutely weighing the benefits and disadvantages of trusting Jonson as he had desired me to do.

To reduce the question to the simplest form of logic, he had either the power of assisting my investigation or he had not: if not, neither could he much impede it, and therefore it mattered little whether he was in my confidence or not; if he *had* the power, the doubt was, whether it would be better for me to benefit by it openly or by stratagem; that is,—whether it were wiser to state the whole case to him, or continue to gain whatever I was able by dint of a blind examination. Now, the disadvantage of candour was, that if it were his wish to screen Dawson and his friend, he would be

prepared to do so, and even to put them on their guard against my suspicions; but the indifference he had testified with regard to Dawson seemed to render this probability very small. The benefits of candour were more prominent: Job would then be fully aware that his own safety was not at stake; and should I make it more his interest to serve the innocent than the guilty, I should have the entire advantage, not only of any actual information he might possess, but of his skill and shrewdness in providing additional proof or at least suggesting advantageous hints. Moreover, in spite of my vanity and opinion of my own penetration, I could not but confess that it was unlikely that my cross-examination would be very successful with so old and experienced a sinner as Mr. Jonson. "Set a thief to catch a thief," is among the wisest of wise sayings, and accordingly I resolved in favour of a disclosure.

Drawing my chair close to Jonson's, and fixing my eye upon his countenance, I briefly proceeded to sketch Glanville's situation (only concealing his name) and Thornton's charges. I mentioned my own suspicions of the accuser, and my desire of discovering Dawson, whom Thornton appeared to me artfully to secrete. Lastly, I concluded with a solemn promise that if my listener could, by any zeal, exertion, knowledge, or contrivance of his own, procure the detection of the men who, I was convinced, were the murderers, a pension of three hundred pounds a year should be immediately settled upon him.

During my communication, the patient Job sat mute and still, fixing his eyes on the ground, and only betraying, by an occasional elevation of the brows, that he took the slightest interest in the tale; when, however, I touched upon the peroration, which so tenderly concluded with the mention of three hundred pounds a year, a visible change came over the countenance of Mr. Jonson. He rubbed his hands with an air of great content, and one sudden smile broke over his features, and almost buried his eyes amid the intricate host of wrinkles it called forth; the smile vanished as rapidly as it came, and Mr. Job turned round to me with a solemn and sedate aspect.

"Well, your honour," said he, "I 'm glad you 've told me all: we must see what can be done. As for Thornton, I 'm afraid we sha' n't make much out of him, for he 's an old offender, whose conscience is as hard as a brickbat; but of Dawson I hope better things. However, you must let me go now, for this is a matter that requires a vast deal of private consideration. I shall call upon you to-morrow, sir, before ten o'clock, since you say matters are so pressing; and, I trust, you will then see that you have no reason to repent of the confidence you have placed in a man of *honour*."

So saying, Mr. Job Jonson emptied the remainder of the bottle into his tumbler, held it up to the light with the *gusto* of a connoisseur, and concluded his potations with a hearty smack of the lips, followed by a long sigh.

"Ah, your honour!" said he, "good wine is a marvellous whetter of the intellect: but your true philosopher is always moderate; for my part, I never exceed my two bottles."

And with these words this true philosopher took his departure.

No sooner was I freed from his presence than my thoughts flew to Ellen; I had neither been able to call nor write the whole of the day, and I was painfully fearful lest my precaution with Sir Reginald's valet had been frustrated, and the alarm of his imprisonment had reached her and Lady Glanville. Harassed by this fear, I disregarded the lateness of the hour, and immediately repaired to Berkeley Square.

Lady and Miss Glanville were alone and at dinner: the servant spoke with his usual unconcern. "They are quite well?" said I, relieved, but still anxious; and the servant replying in the affirmative, I again returned home, and wrote a long, and, I hope, consoling letter to Sir Reginald.

CHAPTER LXXX.

K. Henry. Lord Say, Jack Cade hath sworn to have thy head.
Say. Ay, but I hope your highness shall have his.
2d Part of Henry IV.

PUNCTUAL to his appointment, the next morning came Mr. Job Jonson. I had been on the rack of expectation for the last three hours previous to his arrival, and the warmth of my welcome must have removed any little diffidence with which so shamefaced a gentleman might possibly have been troubled.

At my request, he sat himself down, and, seeing that my breakfast things were on the table, remarked what a famous appetite the fresh air always gave him. I took the hint, and pushed the rolls towards him. He immediately fell to work, and, for the next quarter of an hour, his mouth was far too well occupied for the intrusive impertinence of words. At last the things were removed, and Mr. Jonson began.

"I have thought well over the matter, your honour, and I believe we can manage to trounce the rascals; for I agree with you that there is not a doubt that Thornton and Dawson are the real criminals: but the affair, sir, is one of the greatest difficulty and importance,—nay, of the greatest personal danger. My life may be the forfeit of my desire to serve you; you will not, therefore, be surprised at my accepting your liberal offer of three hundred a year, should I be successful; although I do assure you, sir, that it was my original intention to reject all recompense, for I am naturally benevolent, and love doing a good action. Indeed, sir, if I were alone in the world, I should scorn any remuneration, for virtue is its own reward; but a real moralist, your honour, must not forget his duties on any consideration, and I have a little family to whom my loss would be an irreparable injury; this, upon my honour, is my only inducement for taking ad-

vantage of your generosity;" and as the moralist ceased, he took out of his waistcoat pocket a paper, which he handed to me with his usual bow of deference.

I glanced over it; it was a bond, apparently drawn up in all the legal formalities, pledging myself, in case Job Jonson, before the expiration of three days, gave that information which should lead to the detection and punishment of the true murderers of Sir John Tyrrell, deceased, to insure to the said Job Jonson the yearly annuity of three hundred pounds.

"It is with much pleasure that I shall sign this paper," said I; "but allow me, *par parenthèse,* to observe, that since you only accept the annuity for the sake of benefiting your little family, in case of your death this annuity, ceasing with your life, will leave your family as penniless as at present."

"Pardon me, your honour," rejoined Job, not a whit daunted at the truth of my remark, "*I can insure!*"

"I forgot that," said I, signing and restoring the paper; "and now to business."

Jonson gravely and carefully looked over the interesting document I returned to him, and carefully lapping it in three envelopes, inserted it in a huge red pocket-book, which he thrust into an innermost pocket in his waistcoat.

"Right, sir," said he, slowly; "to business. Before I begin, you must, however, promise me, upon your honour as a gentleman, the strictest secrecy as to my communications."

I readily agreed to this, so far as that secrecy did not impede my present object; and Job, being content with this condition, resumed.

"You must forgive me, if, in order to arrive at the point in question, I set out from one which may seem to you a little distant."

I nodded my assent, and Job continued.

"I have known Dawson for some years; my acquaintance with him commenced at Newmarket, for I have always had a slight tendency to the turf. He was a wild, foolish fellow, easily led into any mischief, but ever the first to sneak out of it; in short, when he became one of *us,* which his extravagance

soon compelled him to do, we considered him as a very serviceable tool, but one who, while he was quite wicked enough to begin a bad action, was much too weak to go through with it; accordingly, he was often employed, but never trusted. By the word *us*, which I see has excited your curiosity, I merely mean a body corporate, established furtively and restricted *solely* to exploits on the turf. I think it right to mention this," continued Mr. Jonson, aristocratically, "because I have the honour to belong to many other societies to which Dawson could never have been admitted. Well, sir, our club was at last broken up, and Dawson was left to shift for himself. His father was still alive, and the young hopeful, having quarrelled with him, was in the greatest distress. He came to me with a pitiful story and a more pitiful face; so I took compassion upon the poor devil, and procured him, by dint of great interest, admission into a knot of good fellows, whom I visited, by the way, last night. Here I took him under my especial care; and, as far as I could, with such a dull-headed dromedary, taught him some of the most elegant arts of my profession. However, the ungrateful dog soon stole back to his old courses, and robbed me of half my share of a booty to which I had helped him myself. I hate treachery and ingratitude, your honour; they are so terribly ungentlemanlike!

"I then lost sight of him, till between two and three months ago, when he returned to town and attended our meetings in company with Tom Thornton, who had been chosen a member of the club some months before. Since we had met, Dawson's father had died, and I thought his flash appearance in town arose from his new inheritance. I was mistaken: old Dawson had tied up the property so tightly that the young one could not scrape enough to pay his debts; accordingly, before he came to town he gave up his life interest in the property to his creditors. However that be, Master Dawson seemed at the top of Fortune's wheel. He kept his horses, and sported the set to champagne and venison; in short, there would have been no end to his extravagance, had not Thornton sucked him like a leech.

"It was about that time that I asked Dawson for a trifle to keep me from gaol; for I was ill in bed, and could not help myself. Will you believe it, sir, that the rascal told me to go and be d—d, and Thornton said amen? I did not forget the ingratitude of my *protégé*, though when I recovered I appeared entirely to do so. No sooner could I walk about, than I relieved all my necessities. He is but a fool who starves, with all London before him! In proportion as my finances improved, Dawson's visibly decayed. With them decreased also his spirits. He became pensive and downcast, never joined any of our parties, and grew gradually quite a useless member of the corporation. To add to his melancholy, he was one morning present at the execution of an unfortunate associate of ours: this made a deep impression upon him; from that moment he became thoroughly moody and despondent. He was frequently heard talking to himself, could not endure to be left alone in the dark, and began rapidly to pine away.

"One night when he and I were seated together, he asked me if I never repented of my sins, and then added, with a groan, that I had never committed the heinous crime he had. I pressed him to confess, but he would not. However, I coupled that half-avowal with his sudden riches and the mysterious circumstances of Sir John Tyrrell's death; and dark suspicions came into my mind. At that time, and indeed ever since Dawson reappeared, we were often in the habit of discussing the notorious murder which then engrossed public attention; and as Dawson and Thornton had been witnesses on the inquest, we frequently referred to them respecting it. Dawson always turned pale and avoided the subject; Thornton, on the contrary, brazened it out with his usual impudence. Dawson's aversion to the mention of the murder now came into my remembrance with double weight, to strengthen my suspicions; and on conversing with one or two of our comrades, I found that my doubts were more than shared, and that Dawson had, when unusually oppressed with his hypochondria, hinted at his committal of some dreadful crime, and at his unceasing remorse for it.

"By degrees, Dawson grew worse and worse,—his health decayed, he started at a shadow,—drank deeply, and spoke in his intoxication words that made the hairs of our *green men* stand on end.

"'We must not suffer this,' said Thornton, whose hardy effrontery enabled him to lord it over the jolly boys as if he were their chief: 'his ravings and humdurgeon will unman all our youngsters.' And so, under this pretence, Thornton had the unhappy man conveyed away to a secret asylum, known only to the chiefs of the gang, and appropriated to the reception of persons who, from the same weakness as Dawson, were likely to endanger others or themselves. There many a poor wretch has been secretly immured, and never suffered to revisit the light of heaven. The moon's minions, as well as the monarch's, must have their state prisoners and their state victims.

"Well, sir, I shall not detain you much longer. Last night, after your obliging confidence, I repaired to the meeting; Thornton was there, and very much out of humour. When our messmates dropped off, and we were alone at one corner of the room, I began talking to him carelessly about his accusation of your friend, who, I have since learnt, is Sir Reginald Glanville,—an old friend of mine too; ay, you may look, sir, —but I can stake my life to having picked his pocket one night at the opera! Thornton was greatly surprised at my early intelligence of a fact hitherto kept so profound a secret; however, I explained it away by a boast of my skill in acquiring information; and he then incautiously let out that he was exceedingly vexed with himself for the charge he had made against the prisoner, and very uneasy at the urgent inquiries set on foot for Dawson. More and more convinced of his guilt, I quitted the meeting and went to Dawson's retreat.

"For fear of his escape, Thornton had had him closely confined in one of the most secret rooms in the house. His solitude and the darkness of the place, combined with his remorse, had worked upon a mind, never too strong, almost to insanity. He was writhing with the most acute and morbid pangs of

conscience that my experience, which has been pretty ample, ever witnessed. The old hag who is the Hecate (you see, sir, I have had a classical education) of the place, was very loth to admit me to him, for Thornton had bullied her into a great fear of the consequences of disobeying his instructions; but she did not dare to resist my orders. Accordingly I had a long interview with the unfortunate man; he firmly believes that Thornton intends to murder him, and says that, if he could escape from his dungeon, he would surrender himself to the first magistrate he could find.

"I told him that an innocent man had been apprehended for the crime of which I *knew* he and Thornton were guilty; and then, taking upon myself the office of a preacher, I exhorted him to atone, as far as possible, for his past crime by a full and faithful confession, that would deliver the innocent and punish the guilty. I held out to him the hope that this confession might perhaps serve the purpose of king's evidence and obtain him a pardon for his crime; and I promised to use my utmost zeal and diligence to promote his escape from his present den.

"He said, in answer, that he did not wish to live; that he suffered the greatest tortures of mind; and that the only comfort earth held out to him would be to ease his remorse by a full acknowledgment of his crime, and to hope for future mercy by expiating his offence on the scaffold; all this, and much more to the same purpose, the hen-hearted fellow told me with sighs and groans. I would fain have taken his confession on the spot and carried it away with me, but he refused to give it to me or to any one but a parson, whose services he implored me to procure him. I told him at first that the thing was impossible; but, moved by his distress and remorse, I promised, at last, to bring one to-night, who should both administer spiritual comfort to him and receive his deposition. My idéa at the moment was to disguise *myself* in the dress of the *pater cove*,[1] and perform the double job; since then I have thought of a better scheme.

[1] Gipsy slang, — a parson, or minister, but generally applied to a priest of the lowest order.

"As my character, you see, your honour, is not so highly prized by the magistrates as it ought to be, any confession made to me might not be of the same value as if it were made to any one else, — to a gentleman like you, for instance; and, moreover, it will not do for me to appear in evidence against any of the fraternity; and for two reasons: first, because I have sworn a solemn oath never to do so; and, secondly, because I have a very fair chance of joining Sir John Tyrrell in kingdom come if I do. My present plan, therefore, if it meets your concurrence, would be to introduce your honour as the parson, and for you to receive the confession, which, indeed, you might take down in writing. This plan, I candidly confess, is not without great difficulty, and some danger; for I have not only to impose you upon Dawson as a priest, but also upon Brimstone Bess as one of our jolly boys; since I need not tell you that any real parson might knock a long time at her door before it would be opened to him. You must, therefore, be as mum as a mole, unless she *cants* to you, and your answers must then be such as I shall dictate; otherwise she may detect you, and, should any of the true men be in the house, we should both come off worse than we went in."

"My dear Mr. Job," replied I, "there appears to me to be a much easier plan than all this; and that is, simply to tell the Bow Street officers where Dawson may be found, and I think they would be able to carry him away from the arms of Mrs. Brimstone Bess without any great difficulty or danger."

Jonson smiled.

"I should not long enjoy my annuity, your honour, if I were to set the runners upon our best hive. I should be stung to death before the week were out. Even you, should you accompany me to-night, will never know where the spot is situated, nor would you discover it again if you searched all London with the whole police at your back. Besides, Dawson is not the only person in the house for whom the law is hunting; there are a score of others whom I have no desire to give up to the gallows, — hid among the odds and ends of the house, as snug as plums in a pudding. Honour forbid that I should betray them, — *and for nothing too!* No, sir,

the only plan I can think of is the one I proposed; if you do not approve of it (and it certainly *is* open to exception), I must devise some other: but that may require delay."

"No, my good Job," replied I, "I am ready to attend you; but could we not manage to release Dawson, as well as take his deposition? — his personal evidence is worth all the written ones in the world."

"Very true," answered Job, "and if it be possible to give Bess the slip we will. However, let us not lose what we may get by grasping at what we may not; let us have the confession first and we 'll try for the release afterwards. I have another reason for this, sir, which, if you knew as much of penitent prigs as I do, you would easily understand. However, it may be explained by the old proverb of 'the devil was sick,' etc. As long as Dawson is stowed away in a dark hole and fancies devils in every corner, he may be very anxious to make confessions which, in broad daylight, may not seem to him so desirable. Darkness and solitude are strange stimulants to the conscience, and we may as well not lose any advantage they give us."

"You are an admirable reasoner," cried I, "and I am impatient to accompany you; at what hour shall it be?"

"Not much before midnight," answered Jonson; "but your honour must go back to school and learn lessons before then. Suppose Bess were to address you thus: 'Well, you parish bull prig, are you for lushing jackey or pattering in the hum box?'[1] I 'll be bound you would not know how to answer."

"I am afraid you are right, Mr. Jonson," said I, in a tone of self-humiliation.

"Never mind," replied the compassionate Job, "we are all born ignorant,—knowledge is not learnt in a day. A few of the most necessary words in our St. Giles's Greek I shall be able to teach you before night; and I will, beforehand, prepare the old lady for seeing a young hand in the profession. As I must disguise you before you go, and that cannot well be done here, suppose you dine with me at my lodgings."

[1] "Well, you parson thief, are you for drinking gin or talking in the pulpit?"

"I shall be too happy," said I, not a little surprised at the offer.

"I am in Charlotte Street, Bloomsbury, No. ——. You must ask for the name of Captain de Courcy," said Job, with dignity; "and we 'll dine at five, in order to have time for our preliminary initiation."

"With all my heart," said I; and Mr. Job Jonson then rose, and, reminding me of my promise of secrecy, took his departure.

CHAPTER LXXXI.

PECTUS præceptis format amicis. — HORACE.

Est quodam prodire tenus, si non datur ultra. — HORACE.

WITH all my love of enterprise and adventure, I cannot say that I should have particularly chosen the project before me for my evening's amusement, had I been left solely to my own will: but Glanville's situation forbade me to think of self; and, so far from shrinking at the danger to which I was about to be exposed, I looked forward with the utmost impatience to the hour of rejoining Jonson.

There was yet a long time upon my hands before five o'clock; and the thought of Ellen left me no doubt how it should be passed. I went to Berkeley Square; Lady Glanville rose eagerly when I entered the drawing-room.

"Have you seen Reginald?" said she, "or do you know where he has gone?"

I answered, carelessly, that he had left town for a few days, and, I believed, merely upon a vague excursion, for the benefit of the country air.

"You reassure us," said Lady Glanville; "we have been quite alarmed by Seymour's manner. He appeared so confused when he told us Reginald had left town, that I really thought some accident had happened to him."

I sat myself by Ellen, who appeared wholly occupied in the formation of a purse. While I was whispering into her ear words which brought a thousand blushes to her cheek, Lady Glanville interrupted me by an exclamation of "Have you seen the papers to-day, Mr. Pelham?" and on my reply in the negative, she pointed to an article in the "Morning Herald," which she said had occupied their conjectures all the morning. It ran thus: —

"The evening before last a person of rank and celebrity was privately carried before the magistrate at ——. Since then, he has undergone an examination, the nature of which, as well as the name of the individual, is as yet kept a profound secret."

I believe that I have so firm a command over my countenance, that I should not change tint nor muscle to hear of the greatest calamity that could happen to me. I did not therefore betray a single one of the emotions this paragraph excited within me; but appeared, on the contrary, as much at a loss as Lady Glanville, and wondered and guessed with her, till she remembered my present situation in the family, and left me alone with Ellen.

Why should the *tête-à-tête* of lovers be so uninteresting to the world, when there is scarcely a being in it who has not loved? The expressions of every other feeling come home to us all,—the expressions of love weary and fatigue us. But the interview of that morning was far from resembling those delicious meetings which the history of love at that early period of its existence so often delineates. I could not give myself up to happiness which a moment might destroy; and though I veiled my anxiety and coldness from Ellen, I felt it as a crime to indulge even the appearance of transport, while Glanville lay alone and in prison, with the charge of murder yet uncontroverted and the chances of its doom undiminished.

The clock had struck four before I left Ellen, and without returning to my hotel, I threw myself into a hackney-coach, and drove to Charlotte Street. The worthy Job received me with his wonted dignity and ease; his lodgings consisted of a first-floor, furnished according to all the notions of Blooms-

bury elegance: namely, new, glaring Brussels carpeting; convex mirrors, with massy gilt frames, and eagles at the summit; rosewood chairs, with chintz cushions; bright grates, with a flower-pot, cut out of yellow paper, in each; in short, all that especial neatness of upholstering paraphernalia, which Vincent used, not inaptly, to designate by the title of the "tea-chest taste." Jonson seemed not a little proud of his apartments; accordingly, I complimented him upon their elegance.

"Under the rose be it spoken," said he, "the landlady, who is a widow, believes me to be an officer on half-pay, and thinks I wish to marry her; poor woman! my black locks and green coat have a witchery that surprises even me: who would be a slovenly thief when there are such advantages in being a smart one?"

"Right, Mr. Jonson," said I; "but shall I own to you that I am surprised that a gentleman of your talents should stoop to the lower arts of the profession? I always imagined that pocket-picking was a part of your business left only to the plebeian purloiner: now I know, to my cost, that you do not disdain that manual accomplishment."

"Your honour speaks like a judge," answered Job; "the fact is, that I *should* despise what you rightly designate 'the lower arts of the profession,' if I did not value myself upon giving them a charm, and investing them with a dignity, never bestowed upon them before. To give you an idea of the superior dexterity with which I manage my sleight of hand, know that four times I have been in that shop where you saw me *borrow* the diamond ring which you now remark upon my little finger; and four times have I brought back some token of my visitations; nay, the shopman is so far from suspecting me that he has twice favoured me with the piteous tale of the very losses I myself brought upon him; and I make no doubt that I shall hear, in a few days, the whole history of the departed diamond, now in my keeping, coupled with that of *your honour's* appearance and custom! Allow that it would be a pity to suffer pride to stand in the way of the talents with which Providence has blessed me; to

scorn the little *delicacies* of art, which I execute so well, would, in my opinion, be as absurd as for an epic poet to disdain the composition of a perfect epigram, or a consummate musician the melody of a faultless song."

"Bravo! Mr. Job," said I; "a truly great man, you see, can confer honour upon trifles." More I might have said, but was stopped short by the entrance of the landlady, who was a fine, fair, well-dressed, comely woman, of about thirty-nine years and eleven months; or, to speak less precisely, *between thirty and forty.* She came to announce that dinner was served below. We descended, and found a sumptuous repast of roast beef and fish; this primary course was succeeded by that great dainty with common people,—a duck and green peas.

"Upon my word, Mr. Jonson," said I, "you fare like a prince; your weekly expenditure must be pretty considerable for a single gentleman."

"I don't know," answered Jonson, with an air of lordly indifference; "I have never paid my good hostess any coin but compliments, and in all probability never shall."

Was there ever a better illustration of Moore's admonition,—

"O ladies, beware of a gay young knight," etc.

After dinner we remounted to the apartments Job emphatically called *his own;* and he then proceeded to initiate me in those phrases of the noble language of "Flash," which might best serve my necessities on the approaching occasion. The slang part of my Cambridge education had made me acquainted with some little elementary knowledge, which rendered Jonson's precepts less strange and abstruse. In this lecture "sweet and holy," the hours passed away till it became time for me to dress. Mr. Jonson then took me into the penetralia of his bedroom. I stumbled against an enormous trunk. On hearing the involuntary anathema which this accident conjured up to my lips, Jonson said,—"Ah, sir!—*do* oblige me by trying to move that box."

I did so, but could not stir it an inch.

"Your honour never saw a *jewel-box* so heavy before, I think," said Jonson, with a smile.

"A jewel-box!"

"Yes," returned Jonson, "a jewel-box, for it is full of *precious stones!* When I go away—not a little in my good landlady's books—I shall desire her, very importantly, to take the greatest care of *'my box.'* Egad! it would be a treasure to MacAdam; he might pound its flinty contents into a street."

With these words, Mr. Jonson unlocked a wardrobe in the room, and produced a full suit of rusty black.

"There," said he, with an air of satisfaction—"there! this will be your first step to the pulpit."

I doffed my own attire, and with "some natural sighs," at the deformity of my approaching metamorphosis, I slowly indued myself in the clerical garments; they were much too wide, and a little too short for me; but Jonson turned me round, as if I were his eldest son, breeched for the first time, and declared, with an emphatical oath, that the clothes fitted me to a hair.

My host next opened a tin dressing-box, of large dimensions, from which he took sundry powders, lotions, and paints. Nothing but my extreme friendship for Glanville could ever have supported me through the operation I then underwent. "My poor complexion," thought I, with tears in my eyes, "it is ruined forever!" To crown all, Jonson robbed me, by four clips of his scissors, of the luxuriant locks which, from the pampered indulgence so long accorded to them, might have rebelled against the new dynasty which Jonson now elected *to the crown.* This dynasty consisted of a shaggy but admirably made wig of a sandy colour. When I was thus completely attired from head to foot, Job displayed me to myself before a full-length looking-glass.

Had I gazed at the reflection forever, I should not have recognized either my form or visage. I thought my soul had undergone a real transmigration, and not carried to its new body a particle of the original one. What appeared the most singular was, that I did not seem even to myself at all a ridiculous or *outré* figure: so admirably had the skill of Mr. Jonson

been employed. I overwhelmed him with encomiums which he took *au pied de la lettre.* Never, indeed, was there a man so vain of being a rogue.

"But," said I, "why this disguise? Your friends will probably be well versed enough in the mysteries of metamorphosis, to see even through your arts; and as they have never beheld me before, it would very little matter if I went *in propria persona.*"

"True," answered Job, "but you don't reflect that without disguise you may hereafter be recognized: our friends walk in Bond Street as well as your honour; and, in that case, you might be shot without a second, as the saying is."

"You have convinced me," said I; "and now, before we start, let me say one word further respecting our *object.* I tell you fairly, I think Dawson's written deposition but a secondary point; and, for this reason, should it not be supported by any *circumstantial* or *local* evidence hereafter to be ascertained, it may be quite insufficient fully to acquit Glanville (in spite of all appearances) and criminate the real murderers. If, therefore, it be *possible* to carry off Dawson, *after* having secured his confession, we must. I think it right to insist more particularly on this point, as you appeared to me rather averse to it this morning."

"I say ditto to your honour," returned Job; "and you may be sure that I shall do all in my power to effect your object, not only from that love of virtue which is implanted in my mind when no stronger inducement leads me astray, but from the more worldly reminiscence that the annuity we have agreed upon is only to be given in case of *success,*—not merely for *well-meaning attempts.* To say that I have no objection to the release of Dawson would be to deceive your honour; I own that I have: and the objection is, first, my fear lest he should *peach* respecting other affairs besides the murder of Sir John Tyrrell; and, secondly, my scruples as to *appearing* to interfere with his escape. Both of these chances expose me to great danger; however, one does not get three hundred a year for washing one's hands, and I must balance the one against the other."

"You are a sensible man, Mr. Job," said I, "and I am sure you will richly earn and long enjoy your annuity."

As I said this, the watchman beneath our window called "past eleven!" and Jonson, starting up, hastily changed his own gay gear for a more simple dress, and throwing over all a Scotch plaid, gave me a similar one, in which I closely wrapped myself. We descended the stairs softly, and Jonson *let us out* into the street by the "open sesame" of a key, which he retained about his person.

CHAPTER LXXXII.

Et *cantare* pares, et respondere parati. — Virgil.

As we walked on into Tottenham Court Road, where we expected to find a hackney-coach, my companion earnestly and strenuously impressed on my mind the necessity of implicitly obeying any instructions or hints he might give me in the course of our adventure. "Remember," said he, forcibly, "that the least deviation from them will not only defeat our object of removing Dawson, but even expose our lives to the most imminent peril." I faithfully promised to conform to the minutest tittle of his instructions.

We came to a stand of coaches. Jonson selected one, and gave the coachman an order; he took care it should not reach my ears. During the half-hour we passed in this vehicle, Job examined and re-examined me in my "canting catechism," as he termed it. He expressed himself much pleased with the quickness of my parts, and honoured me with an assurance that in less than three months he would engage to make me as complete a ruffler as *ever nailed a swell.*

To this gratifying compliment I made the best return in my power.

"You must not suppose," said Jonson, some minutes after

wards, "from our use of this language, that our club consists of the lower order of thieves,—quite the contrary; we are a knot of gentlemen adventurers who wear the best clothes, ride the best hacks, frequent the best gaming-houses as well as the *genteelest* haunts, and sometimes keep *the first company* in London. We are limited in number: we have nothing in common with ordinary prigs, and should my own little private amusements (as you appropriately term them) be known in the set, I should have a very fair chance of being expelled for *ungentlemanlike* practices. We rarely condescend to speak "flash" to each other in our ordinary meetings, but we find it necessary for many shifts to which fortune sometimes drives us. The house you are going this night to visit is a sort of colony we have established for whatever persons amongst us are in danger of blood-money.[1] There they sometimes lie concealed for weeks together, and are at last shipped off for the Continent or enter the world under a new *alias*. To this refuge of the distressed we also send any of the mess who, like Dawson, are troubled with qualms of conscience, which are likely to endanger the commonwealth: there they remain, as in a hospital, till death, or a cure; in short, we put the house, like its inmates, to any purposes likely to frustrate our enemies, and serve ourselves. Old Brimstone Bess, to whom I shall introduce you, is, as I before said, the guardian of the place; and the language that respectable lady chiefly indulges in is the one into which you have just acquired so good an insight. Partly in compliment to her, and partly from inclination, the dialect adopted in our house is almost entirely "flash!" and you therefore perceive the necessity of appearing not utterly ignorant of a tongue which is not only the language of the country, but one with which no true boy, however high in his profession, is ever unacquainted."

By the time Jonson had finished this speech the coach stopped; I looked eagerly out of the window; Jonson observed the motion: "We have not got half-way yet, your honour," said he. We left the coach, which Jonson requested me to pay, and walked on.

[1] Rewards for the apprehension of thieves, etc.

"Tell me frankly, sir," said Job, "do you know where you are?"

"Not in the least," replied I, looking wistfully up a long, dull, ill-lighted street.

Job rolled his sinister eye towards me with a searching look, and then, turning abruptly to the right, penetrated into a sort of covered lane, or court, which terminated in an alley, that brought us suddenly to a stand of three coaches. One of these Job hailed; we entered it; a secret direction was given, and we drove furiously on, faster than I should think the crazy body of hackney chariot ever drove before. I observed that we had now entered a part of the town which was singularly strange to me; the houses were old, and for the most part of the meanest description: we appeared to me to be threading a labyrinth of alleys; once, I imagined that I caught, through a sudden opening, a glimpse of the river, but we passed so rapidly that my eye might have deceived me. At length we stopped; the coachman was again dismissed, and I again walked onwards, under the guidance, and almost at the mercy, of my honest companion.

Jonson did not address me; he was silent and absorbed, and I had therefore full leisure to consider my present situation. Though (thanks to my physical constitution) I am as callous to fear as most men, a few chilling apprehensions certainly flitted across my mind, when I looked round at the dim and dreary sheds — houses they were not — which were on either side of our path; only here and there, a single lamp shed a sickly light upon the dismal and intersecting lanes (though lane is too lofty a word) through which our footsteps woke a solitary sound. Sometimes this feeble light was altogether withheld, and I could scarcely catch even the outline of my companion's muscular frame. However, he strode on through the darkness with the mechanical rapidity of one to whom every stone is familiar. I listened eagerly for the sound of the watchman's voice; in vain: that note was never heard in those desolate recesses. My ear drank in nothing but the sound of our own footsteps, or the occasional burst of obscene and unholy merriment from some half-closed hovel, where In-

famy and Vice were holding revels. Now and then, a wretched thing, in the vilest extreme of want and loathsomeness and rags, loitered by the unfrequent lamps, and interrupted our progress with solicitations which made my blood run cold. By degrees even these tokens of life ceased; the last lamp was entirely shut from our view: we were in utter darkness.

"We are near our journey's end now," whispered Jonson.

At these words a thousand unwelcome reflections forced themselves involuntarily on my mind: I was about to plunge into the most secret retreat of men whom long habits of villany and desperate abandonment had hardened into a nature which had scarcely a sympathy with my own; unarmed and defenceless, I was about to penetrate a concealment upon which their lives perhaps depended; what could I anticipate from their vengeance, but the sure hand and the deadly knife, which their self-preservation would more than justify to such lawless reasoners? And who was my companion? One who literally gloried in the perfection of his nefarious practices; and who, if he had stopped short of the worst enormities, seemed neither to disown the principle upon which they were committed, nor to balance for a moment between his interest and his conscience.

Nor did he attempt to conceal from me the danger to which I was exposed; much as his daring habits of life and the good fortune which had attended him must have hardened his nerves, even *he* seemed fully sensible of the peril he incurred, — a peril certainly considerably less than that which attended *my* temerity. Bitterly did I repent, as these reflections rapidly passed my mind, my negligence in not providing myself with a single weapon in case of need: the worst pang of death is the falling without a struggle.

However, it was no moment for the indulgence of fear, it was rather one of those eventful periods which so rarely occur in the monotony of common life, when our minds are sounded to their utmost depths; and energies, of which we dreamt not when at rest in their secret retreats, arise like spirits at the summons of the wizard, and bring to the invoking mind an unlooked for and preternatural aid.

There was something, too, in the disposition of my guide, which gave me a confidence in him, not warranted by the occupations of his life; an easy and frank boldness, an ingenuous vanity of abilities, skilfully though dishonestly exerted, which had nothing of the meanness and mystery of an ordinary villain, and which, being equally prominent with the rascality they adorned, prevented the attention from dwelling upon the darker shades of his character. Besides, I had so closely entwined his interest with my own that I felt there could be no possible ground either for suspecting him of any deceit towards me, or of omitting any art or exertion which could conduce to our mutual safety or our common end.

Forcing myself to dwell solely upon the more encouraging side of the enterprise I had undertaken, I continued to move on with my worthy comrade, silent and in darkness, for some minutes longer; Jonson then halted.

"Are you quite prepared, sir?" said he, in a whisper: "if your heart fails, in Heaven's name let us turn back; the least evident terror will be as much as your life is worth."

My thoughts were upon Reginald and Ellen, as I replied,—

"You have told and *convinced* me that I may trust in you, and I have no fears; my present object is one as strong to me as life."

"I would we had a *glim*," rejoined Job, musingly, "I should like to see your face; but will you give me your hand, sir?"

I did, and Jonson held it in his own for more than a minute.

" 'Fore Gad, sir," said he at last, "I would you were one of us: you would live a brave man and die a game one. Your pulse is like iron and your hand does not sway,—no—not so much as to wave a dove's feather: it would be a burning shame if harm came to so stout a heart." Job moved on a few steps. "Now, sir," he whispered, "remember your flash; do exactly as I may have occasion to tell you; and be sure to sit away from the light, should we be in company."

With these words he stopped. By the touch (for it was too dark to see) I felt that he was bending down, apparently in a listening attitude; presently he tapped five times at what I supposed was the door, though I afterwards discovered it

was the shutter to a window; upon this, a faint light broke through the crevices of the boards, and a low voice uttered some sound, which my ear did not catch. Job replied in the same key, and in words which were perfectly unintelligible to me; the light disappeared; Job moved round, as if turning a corner. I heard the heavy bolts and bars of a door slowly withdrawn; and in a few moments, a harsh voice said, in the thieves' dialect,—

"Ruffling Job, my prince of prigs, is that you? are you come to the ken alone, or do you carry double?"

"Ah, Bess my covess, strike me blind if my sees don't tout your bingo muns in spite of the darkmans. Egad, you carry a bene blink aloft. Come to the ken alone,—no! my blowen: did not I tell you I should bring a pater cove, to chop up the whiners for Dawson?"[1]

"Stubble it, you ben, you deserve to cly the jerk for your patter; come in, and be d—d to you."[2]

Upon this invitation, Jonson, seizing me by the arm, pushed me into the house and followed. "Go for a glim, Bess, to light in the black 'un with proper respect. I 'll close the gig of the crib."

At this order, delivered in an authoritative tone, the old woman, mumbling "strange oaths" to herself, moved away; when she was out of hearing, Job whispered,—

"Mark, I shall leave the bolts undrawn: the door opens with a latch, which you press *thus*,—do not forget the spring; it is easy, but peculiar; should you be forced to run for it, you will also remember, above all, when you are out of the door, to turn *to the right*, and go straight forwards."

The old woman now reappeared with a light, and Jonson ceased, and moved hastily towards her: I followed. The old woman asked whether the door had been carefully closed, and Jonson, with an oath at her doubts of such a matter, answered in the affirmative.

[1] "Strike me blind, if my eyes don't see your brandy face in spite of the night. Come to the house alone, — no! my good woman: did not I tell you I should bring a parson to say prayers for Dawson?"

[2] "Hold your tongue, fool, you deserve to be whipped for your chatter."

We proceeded onwards, through a long and very narrow passage, till Bess opened a small door to the right, and introduced us into a large room, which, to my great dismay, I found already occupied by four men, who were sitting, half immersed in smoke, by an oak table, with a capacious bowl of hot liquor before them. At the background of this room, which resembled the kitchen of a public-house, was an enormous screen of antique fashion; a low fire burned sullenly in the grate, and beside it was one of those high-backed chairs seen frequently in old houses and old pictures. A clock stood in one corner, and in the opposite nook was a flight of narrow stairs, which led downwards, probably to a cellar. On a row of shelves were various bottles of the different liquors generally in request among the flash gentry, together with an old-fashioned fiddle, two bridles, and some strange-looking tools, probably of more use to true boys than to honest men.

Brimstone Bess was a woman about the middle size, but with bones and sinews which would not have disgraced a prize-fighter; a cap, that *might* have been cleaner, was rather *thrown* than *put* on the back of her head, developing, to full advantage, the few scanty locks of grizzled ebon which adorned her countenance. Her eyes, large, black, and prominent, sparkled with a fire half-vivacious, half-vixen. The nasal feature was broad and *fungous*, and, as well as the whole of her capacious physiognomy, blushed with the deepest scarlet: it was evident to see that many a full bottle of "British compounds" had contributed to the feeding of that burning and phosphoric illumination, which was indeed "the outward and visible sign of an inward and *spiritual* grace."

The expression of the countenance was not wholly bad. Amidst the deep traces of searing vice and unrestrained passion,—amidst all that was bold and unfeminine, and fierce and crafty, there was a latent look of coarse good-humour, a twinkle of the eye that bespoke a tendency to mirth and drollery, and an upward curve of the lip that showed, however the human creature might be debased, it still cherished its grand characteristic,—the propensity to laughter.

The garb of this Dame Leonarda was by no means of that humble nature which one might have supposed. A gown of crimson silk, flounced and furbelowed to the knees, was tastefully relieved by a bright yellow shawl; and a pair of heavy pendants glittered in her ears, which were of the size proper to receive "the big words" they were in the habit of hearing. Probably this finery had its origin in the policy of her guests, who had seen enough of life to know that age, which tames all other passions, never tames the passion of dress in a woman's heart.

No sooner did the four revellers set their eyes upon me than they all rose.

"Zounds, Bess!" cried the tallest of them, "what cull 's this? is this a bowsing ken for every cove to shove his trunk in?"

"What ho, my kiddy!" cried Job, "don't be glimflashy: why, you'd cry beef on a blater: the cove is a bob cull, and a pal of my own;[1] and moreover is as pretty a Tyburn blossom as ever was brought up to ride a horse foaled by an acorn."

Upon this commendatory introduction I was forthwith surrounded, and one of the four proposed that I should be immediately "elected."

This motion, which was probably no gratifying ceremony, Job negatived with a dictatorial air, and reminded his comrades that however they might find it convenient to lower themselves occasionally, yet that they were gentlemen sharpers, and not vulgar cracksmen and clyfakers, and that, therefore, they ought to welcome me with the good breeding appropriate to their station.

Upon this hint, which was received with mingled laughter and deference (for Job seemed to be a man of might among these Philistines), the tallest of the set, who bore the euphonious appellation of Spider-shanks, politely asked me if I would "blow a cloud with him!" and upon my assent (for I thought such an occupation would be the best excuse for silence), he presented me with a pipe of tobacco, to which

[1] "Don't be angry! Why, you 'd cry beef on a calf: the man is a good fellow, and a comrade of my own," etc.

Dame Brimstone applied a light, and I soon lent my best endeavours to darken still further the atmosphere around us.

Mr. Job Jonson then began artfully to turn the conversation away from me to the elder confederates of his crew; these were all spoken of under certain singular appellations which might well baffle impertinent curiosity. The name of one was "the Gimlet," another "Crack Crib," a third "the Magician," a fourth, "Cherry-coloured Jowl." The tallest of the present company was called as (I before said) "Spider-shanks," and the shortest "Fib Fakescrew;" Job himself was honoured by the *venerabile nomen* of "Guinea Pig." At last Job explained the cause of my appearance; namely, his wish to pacify Dawson's conscience by dressing up one of the pals, whom the sinner could not recognize, as an "autem bawler," and so obtaining him the benefit of the clergy without endangering the gang by his confession. This detail was received with great good-humour, and Job, watching his opportunity, soon after rose, and turning to me, said,—

"Toddle, my bob cull; we must track up the dancers and tout the sinner."[1]

I wanted no other hint to leave my present situation.

"The ruffian cly thee, Guinea Pig, for stashing the lush,"[2] said Spider-shanks, helping himself out of the bowl, which was nearly empty.

"Stash the lush!" cried Mrs. Brimstone, "ay, and toddle off to Ruggins. Why, you would not be boosing till lightmans in a square crib like mine, as if you were in a flash panny?"[3]

"That 's bang up, mort!" cried Fib. "A square crib, indeed! ay, square as Mr. Newman's courtyard,—ding-boys on three sides and the crap on the fourth!"[4]

This characteristic witticism was received with great ap-

[1] "Move, my good fellow; we must go upstairs, and look at the sinner."

[2] "The devil take thee for stopping the drink."

[3] "Stop the drink, ay, and be off to bed. You would not be drinking till day in an honest house like mine, as if you were in a disreputable place?"

[4] "That 's capital. A square crib (honest house)! Ay, square as Newgate courtyard,—rogues on three sides and the gallows on the fourth."

plause; and Jonson, taking a candlestick from the fair fingers of the exasperated Mrs. Brimstone, the hand thus conveniently released immediately transferred itself to Fib's cheeks, with so hearty a concussion that it almost brought the rash jester to the ground. Jonson and I lost not a moment in taking advantage of the confusion this gentle remonstrance appeared to occasion, but instantly left the room and closed the door.

CHAPTER LXXXIII.

'T is true that we are in great danger;
The greater, therefore, should our courage be. — SHAKSPEARE.

WE proceeded a short way, when we were stopped by a door; this Job opened, and a narrow staircase, lighted from above by a dim lamp, was before us. We ascended, and found ourselves in a sort of gallery; here hung another lamp, beneath which Job opened a closet.

"This is the place where Bess generally leaves the keys," said he; "we shall find them here, I hope."

So saying, Master Job entered, leaving me in the passage; but soon returned with a disappointed air.

"The old harridan has left them below," said he: "I must go down for them; your honour will wait here till I return."

Suiting the action to the word, honest Job immediately descended, leaving me alone with my own reflections. Just opposite to the closet was the door of some apartment. I leaned accidentally against it; it was only ajar, and gave way; the ordinary consequence in such accidents is a certain precipitation from the centre of gravity. I am not exempt from the general lot, and accordingly entered the room in a manner entirely contrary to that which my natural inclination would have prompted me to adopt. My ear was accosted by a faint voice, which proceeded from a bed at the opposite corner: it

asked, in the thieves' dialect, and in the feeble accents of bodily weakness, who was there? I did not judge it necessary to make any reply, but was withdrawing as gently as possible, when my eye rested upon a table at the foot of the bed, upon which, among two or three miscellaneous articles, were deposited a brace of pistols, and one of those admirable swords, made according to the modern military regulation, for the united purpose of cut and thrust. The light which enabled me to discover the contents of the room proceeded from a rushlight placed in the grate; this general symptom of a valetudinarian, together with some other little odd matters (combined with the weak voice of the speaker), impressed me with the idea of having intruded into the chamber of some sick member of the crew. Emboldened by this notion and by perceiving that the curtains were drawn closely around the bed, so that the inmate could have optical discernment of nothing that occurred without, I could not resist taking two soft steps to the table, and quietly removing a weapon, whose bright face seemed to invite me as a long-known and long-tried friend. This was not, however, done in so noiseless a manner but what the voice again addressed me, in a somewhat louder key, by the appellation of "Brimstone Bess," asking, with sundry oaths, "what was the matter?" and requesting something to drink. I need scarcely say that, as before, I made no reply, but crept out of the room as gently as possible, blessing my good fortune for having thrown into my way a weapon with the use of which, above all others, I was acquainted. Scarcely had I regained the passage, before Jonson reappeared with the keys; I showed him my treasure (for indeed it was of no size to conceal).

"Are you mad, sir?" said he, "or do you think that the best way to avoid suspicion is to walk about with a drawn sword in your hand? I would not have Bess see you for the best diamond I ever *borrowed*." With these words Job took the sword from my reluctant hand.

"Where did you get it?" said he.

I explained in a whisper, and Job, re-opening the door I had so unceremoniously entered, laid the weapon softly *on a*

chair that stood within reach. The sick man, whose senses were of course rendered doubly acute by illness, once more demanded in a fretful tone, who was there. And Job replied, in the flash language, that Bess had sent him up to look for her keys, which she imagined she had left there. The invalid rejoined by a request to Jonson to reach him a draught, and we had to undergo a further delay until his petition was complied with; we then proceeded up the passage till we came to another flight of steps, which led to a door; Job opened it, and we entered a room of no common dimensions.

"This," said he, "is Bess Brimstone's sleeping apartment; whoever goes into the passage that leads not only to Dawson's room, but to the several other chambers occupied by such of the gang as require *particular care,* must pass first through this room. You see that bell by the bedside; I assure you it is no ordinary tintinnabulum; it communicates with every sleeping apartment in the house, and is only rung in cases of great alarm, when every boy must look well to himself: there are two more of this description,—one in the room which we have just left, another in the one occupied by Spider-shanks, who is our watch-dog and keeps his kennel below. Those steps in the common room, which seem to lead to a cellar, conduct to his den. As we shall have to come back through this room, you see the difficulty of smuggling Dawson; and if the old dame rung the alarm, the whole hive would be out in a moment."

After this speech, Job led me from the room by a door at the opposite end, which showed us a passage similar in extent and fashion to the one we had left below; at the very extremity of this was the entrance to an apartment at which Jonson stopped.

"Here," said he, taking from his pocket a small paper book and an ink-horn; "here, your honour, take these; you may want to note the heads of Dawson's confession: we are now at his door." Job then applied one of the keys of a tolerably sized bunch to the door, and the next moment we were in Dawson's apartment.

The room, which, though low and narrow, was of consider-

able length, was in utter darkness, and the dim and flickering light which Jonson held only struggled with, rather than penetrated, the thick gloom. About the centre of the room stood the bed, and sitting upright on it, with a wan and hollow countenance, bent eagerly towards us, was a meagre attenuated figure. My recollection of Dawson, whom it will be remembered I had only seen once before, was extremely faint, but it had impressed me with the idea of a middle-sized and rather athletic man, with a fair and florid complexion: the creature I now saw was totally the reverse of this idea. His cheeks were yellow and drawn in; his hand, which was raised in the act of holding aside the curtains, was like the talons of a famished vulture, so thin was it, so long, so withered in its hue and texture.

No sooner did the advancing light allow him to see us distinctly, than he half sprang from the bed, and cried, in that peculiar tone of joy which seems to throw off from the breast a suffocating weight of previous terror and suspense, "Thank God, thank God! it is you at last; and you have brought the clergyman; God bless you, Jonson! you are a true friend to me."

"Cheer up, Dawson," said Job; "I have smuggled in this worthy gentleman, who, I have no doubt, will be of great comfort to you,—but you must be open with him and tell all."

"That I will,—that I will," cried Dawson, with a wild and vindictive expression of countenance,—"if it be only to hang *him*. Here, Jonson, give me your hand, bring the light nearer—I say,—*he*, the devil—the fiend—has been here to-day and threatened to murder me; and I have listened, and listened, all night, and thought I heard his step along the passage, and up the stairs, and at the door; but it was nothing, Job, nothing; and you are come at last, good, kind, worthy Job. Oh! 't is so horrible to be left in the dark, and not sleep; and in this large, large room, which looks like eternity at night; and one does fancy such sights, Job,—such horrid, horrid sights. Feel my wristband, Jonson, and here at my back, you would think they had been pouring

water over me, but it 's only the cold sweat. Oh! 't is fearful to have a bad conscience, Job; but you won't leave me till daylight, now, that 's a dear, good Job!"

"For shame, Dawson!" said Jonson; "pluck up, and be a man; you are like a baby frightened by its nurse. Here 's the clergyman come to heal your poor wounded conscience: will you hear him *now?*"

"Yes," said Dawson; "yes! — but go out of the room; I can't tell all if you 're here; go, Job, go; but you 're not angry with me; I don't mean to offend you."

"Angry!" said Job; "Lord help the poor fellow! no, to be sure not. I 'll stay outside the door, till you 've done with the clergyman; but make haste, for the night 's almost over, and it 's as much as the parson's life is worth to stay here after daybreak."

"I *will* make haste," said the guilty man, tremulously; "but Job, where are you going, — what are you doing? *leave the light! here,* Job, by the bedside."

Job did as he was desired, and quitted the room, leaving the door not so firmly shut but that he might hear, if the penitent spoke aloud, every particular of his confession.

I seated myself on the side of the bed, and taking the skeleton hand of the unhappy man, spoke to him in the most consolatory and comforting words I could summon to my assistance. He seemed greatly soothed by my efforts, and at last implored me to let him join me in prayer. I knelt down, and my lips readily found words for that language which, whatever be the formula of our faith, seems, in all emotions which come home to our hearts, the most natural method of expressing them. It is *here,* by the bed of sickness, or remorse, that the ministers of God have their real power! it is here that their office is indeed a divine and unearthly mission; and that in breathing balm and comfort, in healing the broken heart, in raising the crushed and degraded spirit, they are the voice and oracle of the FATHER, who made us in benevolence, and will judge us in mercy! I rose, and after a short pause, Dawson, who expressed himself impatient for the comfort of confession, thus began, —

"I have no time, sir, to speak of the earlier part of my life. I passed it upon the race-course and at the gaming-table; all that was, I know, very wrong and wicked: but I was a wild, idle boy, and eager for anything like enterprise or mischief. Well, sir, it is now more than three years ago since I first met with one Tom Thornton; it was at a boxing-match. Tom was chosen chairman at a sort of club of the farmers and yeomen; and being a lively, amusing fellow, and accustomed to the company of gentlemen, was a great favourite with all of us. He was very civil to me, and I was quite pleased with his notice. I did not, however, see much of him then, nor for more than two years afterwards; but some months ago we met again. I was in very poor circumstances, so was he, and this made us closer friends than we might otherwise have been. He lived a great deal at the gambling-houses, and fancied he had discovered a certain method of winning[1] at hazard. So, when he could not find a gentleman whom he could cheat with false dice, tricks at cards, etc., he would go into any hell to try his infallible game. I did not, however, perceive that he made a good living by it; and though sometimes, either by that method or some other, he had large sums of money in his possession, yet they were spent as soon as acquired. The fact was, that he was not a man that could ever grow rich; he was extremely extravagant in all things, — loved women and drinking, and was always striving to get into the society of people above him. In order to do this, he affected great carelessness of money, and if, at a race or a cock-fight, any real gentlemen would go home with him, he would insist upon treating them to the best of everything.

"Thus, sir, he was always poor, and at his wit's-end for means to supply his extravagance. He introduced me to three or four *gentlemen*, as he called them, but whom I have since found to be markers, sharpers, and blacklegs; and this set soon dissipated the little honesty my own habits of life had left me. They never spoke of things by their right names; and, therefore, those things never seemed so bad as they really were: to swindle a gentleman did not sound a crime when

[1] A very common delusion both among sharpers and their prey.

it was called 'macing a swell;' nor transportation a punishment, when it was termed with a laugh, 'lagging a cove.' Thus, insensibly, my ideas of right and wrong, always obscure, became perfectly confused; and the habit of treating all crimes as subjects of jest in familiar conversation soon made me regard them as matters of very trifling importance.

"Well, sir, at Newmarket races, this Spring meeting, Thornton and I were on *the lookout*. He had come down to stay, during the races, at a house I had just inherited from my father, but which was rather an expense to me than an advantage, especially as my wife, who was an innkeeper's daughter, was very careless and extravagant. It so happened that we were both taken in by a jockey, whom we had bribed very largely, and were losers to a very considerable amount. Among other people, I lost to a Sir John Tyrrell. I expressed my vexation to Thornton, who told me not to mind it, but to tell Sir John that I would pay him if he came to the town; and that he was quite sure we could win enough by his certain game at hazard to pay off my debt. He was so very urgent that I allowed myself to be persuaded: though Thornton has since told me that his only motive was to prevent Sir John's going to the Marquis of Chester's (where he was invited) with my lord's party; and so to have an opportunity of accomplishing the crime he then meditated.

"Accordingly, as Thornton desired, I asked Sir John Tyrrell to come with me to Newmarket. He did so. I left him, joined Thornton, and went to the gambling-house. Here we were engaged in Thornton's sure game when Sir John entered. I went up and apologized for not paying, and said I would pay him in three months. However, Sir John was very angry, and treated me with such rudeness that the whole table remarked it. When he was gone, I told Thornton how hurt and indignant I was at Sir John's treatment. He incensed me still more, exaggerated Sir John's conduct, said that I had suffered the grossest insult; and at last put me into such a passion that I said that, if I were a gentleman, I would fight Sir John Tyrrell across the table.

"When Thornton saw I was so moved, he took me out of

the room and carried me to an inn. Here he ordered dinner and several bottles of wine. I never could bear much drink: he knew this, and artfully plied me with wine till I scarcely knew what I did or said. He then talked much of our destitute situation; affected to put himself out of the question; said he was a single man, and could easily make shift upon a potato, but that I was encumbered with a wife and child, whom I could not suffer to starve. He then said that Sir John Tyrrell had publicly disgraced me, that I should be blown upon the course, that no gentleman would bet with me again, and a great deal more of the same sort. Seeing what an effect he had produced upon me, he then told me that he had seen Sir John receive a large sum of money, which would more than pay our debts and set us up like gentlemen; and, at last, he proposed to me to rob him. Intoxicated as I was, I was somewhat startled at this proposition. However, the slang terms in which Thornton disguised the greatness and danger of the offence very much diminished both in my eyes; so at length I consented.

"We went to Sir John's inn, and learned that he had just set out: accordingly we mounted our horses and rode after him. The night had already closed in. After we had got some distance from the main road, into a lane, which led both to my house and to Chester Park, — for the former was on the direct way to my lord's, — we passed a man on horseback. I only observed that he was wrapped in a cloak; but Thornton said, directly we had passed him, 'I know that man well; he has been following Tyrrell all day; and though he attempts to screen himself, I have penetrated his disguise: he is Tyrrell's mortal enemy.

"'Should the worst come to the worst,' added Thornton (words which I did not at that moment understand), 'we can make *him* bear the blame.'

"When we had got some way further, we came up to Tyrrell and a gentleman, whom, to our great dismay, we found that Sir John had joined; the gentleman's horse had met with an accident, and Thornton dismounted to offer his assistance. He assured the gentleman, who proved afterwards to

be a Mr. Pelham, that the horse was quite lame, and that he would scarcely be able to get it home; and he then proposed to Sir John to accompany us, and said that we would put him in the right road; this offer Sir John rejected very haughtily, and we rode on.

"'It's all up with us,' said I, 'since he has joined another person.'

"'Not at all,' replied Thornton; 'for I managed to give the horse a sly poke with my knife; and if I know anything of Sir John Tyrrell, he is much too impatient a spark to crawl along, a snail's pace, with any companion, especially with this heavy shower coming on.'

"'But,' said I, for I now began to recover from my intoxication and to be sensible of the nature of our undertaking, 'the moon is up, and, unless this shower conceals it, Sir John will recognize us; so you see, even if he leave the gentleman, it will be no use, and we had much better make haste home and go to bed.'

"Upon this, Thornton cursed me for a faint-hearted fellow, and said that the cloud would effectually hide the moon, or if not, he added, 'I know how to silence a prating tongue.' At these words I was greatly alarmed, and said that, if he meditated murder as well as robbery, I would have nothing further to do with it. Thornton laughed, and told me not to be a fool. While we were thus debating a heavy shower came on; we rode hastily to a large tree by the side of a pond,—which, though bare and withered, was the nearest shelter the country afforded, and was only a short distance from my house. I wished to go home; but Thornton would not let me, and, as I was always in the habit of yielding, I remained with him, though very reluctantly, under the tree.

"Presently we heard the trampling of a horse.

"'It is he,—it is he,' cried Thornton, with a savage tone of exultation,—'and alone! Be ready; we must make a rush; I will be the one to bid him to deliver; you hold your tongue.'

"The clouds and rain had so overcast the night that, although it was not *perfectly dark*, it was sufficiently obscure

to screen our countenances. Just as Tyrrell approached, Thornton dashed forward, and cried, in a feigned voice,—'Stand, on your peril!' I followed, and we were now both by Sir John's side.

"He attempted to push by us: but Thornton seized him by the arm; there was a stout struggle, in which, as yet, I had no share; at last, Tyrrell got loose from Thornton, and I seized him; he set spurs to his horse, which was a very spirited and strong animal; it reared upwards, and very nearly brought me and my horse to the ground; at that instant, Thornton struck the unfortunate man a violent blow across the head with the butt-end of his heavy whip; Sir John's hat had fallen before in the struggle, and the blow was so stunning that it felled him upon the spot. Thornton dismounted, and made me do the same. 'There is no time to lose,' said he; 'let us drag him from the roadside, and rifle him.' We accordingly carried him (he was still senseless) to the side of the pond before mentioned. While we were searching for the money Thornton spoke of, the storm ceased, and the moon broke out; we were detained some moments by the accident of Tyrrell's having transferred his pocket-book from the pocket Thornton had seen him put it in on the race-ground to an inner one.

"We had just discovered and seized the pocket-book, when Sir John awoke from his swoon, and his eyes opened upon Thornton, who was still bending over him, and looking at the contents of the book to see that all was right; the moonlight left Tyrrell in no doubt as to our persons; and struggling hard to get up, he cried, 'I know you! I know you! you shall hang for this.' No sooner had he uttered this imprudence than it was all over with him. 'We will see that, Sir John,' said Thornton, setting his knee upon Tyrrell's chest and nailing him down. While thus employed, he told me to feel in his coat-pocket for a case-knife.

"'For God's sake,' cried Tyrrell, with a tone of agonizing terror which haunts me still, 'spare my life!'

"'It is too late,' said Thornton, deliberately, and taking the knife from my hands, he plunged it into Sir John's side, and

as the blade was too short to reach the vitals, Thornton drew it backwards and forwards to widen the wound. Tyrrell was a strong man, and still continued to struggle and call out for mercy; Thornton drew out the knife; Tyrrell seized it by the blade, and his fingers were cut through before Thornton could snatch it from his grasp; the wretched gentleman then saw all hope was over: he uttered one loud, sharp cry of despair. Thornton put one hand to his mouth, and with the other gashed his throat from ear to ear.

"'You have done for him and for us now,' said I, as Thornton slowly rose from the body. 'No,' replied he, 'look, he still moves;' and sure enough he did, but it was in the last agony. However, Thornton, to make all sure, plunged the knife again into his body; the blade came in contact with a bone and snapped in two: so great was the violence of the blow, that, instead of remaining in the flesh, the broken piece fell upon the ground among the long fern and grass.

"While we were employed in searching for it, Thornton, whose ears were much sharper than mine, caught the sound of a horse. 'Mount! mount!' he cried, 'and let us be off!' We sprang upon our horses, and rode away as fast as we could. I wished to go home, as it was so near at hand: but Thornton insisted on making to an old shed, about a quarter of a mile across the fields; thither therefore we went."

"Stop," said I: "what did Thornton do with the remaining part of the case-knife? Did he throw it away, or carry it with him?"

"He took it with him," answered Dawson, "for his name was engraved on a silver plate on the handle; and he was therefore afraid of throwing it into the pond, as I advised, lest at any time it should be discovered. Close by the shed there is a plantation of young firs of some extent; Thornton and I entered, and he dug a hole with the broken blade of the knife, and buried it, covering up the hole again with the earth."

"Describe the place," said I. Dawson paused and seemed to recollect. I was on the very tenterhooks of suspense, for I saw with one glance all the importance of his reply.

After some moments he shook his head: "I *cannot* describe the place," said he, "for the wood is so thick; yet I know the exact spot so well that, were I in any part of the plantation, I could point it out immediately."

I told him to pause again and recollect himself; and at all events *to try* to indicate the place. However, his account was so confused and perplexed that I was forced to give up the point in despair, and he continued:—

"After we had done this, Thornton told me to hold the horses, and said he would go alone, to spy whether we might return; accordingly he did so, and brought back word, in about half an hour, that he had crept cautiously along till in sight of the place, and then, throwing himself down on his face by the ridge of a bank, had observed a man (who he was sure was the person with a cloak we had passed, and who, he said, was Sir Reginald Glanville) mount his horse on the very spot of the murder, and ride off, while another person (Mr. Pelham) appeared, and also discovered the fatal place.

"'There is no doubt now,' said he, 'that we shall have the hue-and-cry upon us. However, if you are stanch and stout-hearted no possible danger can come to us; for you may leave me alone to throw the whole guilt upon Sir Reginald Glanville.'

"We then mounted and rode home. We stole upstairs by the back way. Thornton's linen and hands were stained with blood. The former he took off, locked up carefully, and burnt the first opportunity: the latter he washed; and that the water might not lead to detection, *drank it.* We then appeared as if nothing had occurred, and learned that Mr. Pelham had been to the house; but as, very fortunately, our outbuildings had been lately robbed by some idle people, my wife and servants had refused to admit him. I was thrown into great agitation, and was extremely frightened. However, as Mr. Pelham had left a message that we were to go to the pond, Thornton insisted upon our repairing there to avoid suspicion."

Dawson then proceeded to say that, on their return, as he was still exceedingly nervous, Thornton insisted on his going

to bed. When our party from Lord Chester's came to the house, Thornton went into Dawson's room, and made him swallow a large tumbler of brandy;[1] this intoxicated him so as to make him less sensible to his dangerous situation. Afterwards, when the picture was found, which circumstance Thornton communicated to him, along with that of the threatening letter sent by Glanville to the deceased, which was discovered in Tyrrell's pocket-book, Dawson recovered courage, and justice being entirely thrown on a wrong scent, he managed to pass his examination without suspicion. He then went to town with Thornton, and constantly attended "the club," to which Jonson had before introduced him; at first, among his new comrades, and while the novel flush of the money he had so fearfully acquired lasted, he partially succeeded in stifling his remorse. But the success of crime is too contrary to nature to continue long; his poor wife, whom, in spite of *her* extravagant and *his* dissolute habits, he seemed really to love, fell ill and died; on her death-bed she revealed the suspicions she had formed of his crime, and said that those suspicions had preyed upon and finally destroyed her health: this awoke him from the guilty torpor of his conscience. His share of the money, too, the greater part of which Thornton had bullied out of him, was gone. He fell, as Job had said, into despondency and gloom, and often spoke to Thornton so forcibly of his remorse, and so earnestly of his gnawing and restless desire to appease his mind by surrendering himself to justice, that the fears of that villain grew, at length, so thoroughly alarmed as to procure his removal to his present abode.

It was here that his real punishment commenced; closely confined to his apartment, at the remotest corner of the house, his solitude was never broken but by the short and hurried visits of his female gaoler, and (worse even than loneliness) the occasional invasions of Thornton. There appeared to be, in that abandoned wretch, what for the honour of human nature is but rarely found; namely, a love of sin, not for its

[1] A common practice with thieves, who fear the weak nerves of their accomplices.

objects, but itself. With a malignity, doubly fiendish from its inutility, he forbade Dawson the only indulgence he craved, —a light during the dark hours; and not only insulted him for his cowardice, but even added to his terrors by threats of effectually silencing them.

The fears had so wildly worked upon the man's mind, that prison itself appeared to him an elysium to the hell he endured; and when his confession was ended, and I said, "If you can be freed from this place, would you repeat before a magistrate all that you have now told me?" he started up in delight at the very thought. In truth, besides his remorse, and that inward and impelling voice which, in all the annals of murder, seems to urge the criminal onwards to the last expiation of his guilt,—besides these, there mingled in his mind a sentiment of bitter yet cowardly vengeance against his inhuman accomplice; and perhaps he found consolation for his own fate in the hope of wreaking upon Thornton's head somewhat of the tortures that ruffian had inflicted upon him.

I had taken down in my book the heads of the confession, and I now hastened to Jonson, who, waiting without the door, had (as I had anticipated) heard all.

"You see," said I, "that however satisfactory this recital has been, it contains no secondary or innate proofs to confirm it; the only evidence with which it could furnish us would be the remnant of the broken knife, engraved with Thornton's name; but you have heard from Dawson's account, how impossible it would be in an extensive wood for any one to discover the spot but himself. You will agree with me, therefore, that we must not leave this house without Dawson."

Job changed colour slightly.

"I see as clearly as you do," said he, "that it will be necessary for my annuity, and your friend's full acquittal, to procure Dawson's personal evidence: but it is late now; the men may be still drinking below; Bess may be still awake and stirring; even if she sleeps, how could we pass her room without disturbing her? I own that I do not see a chance of effecting his escape to-night, without incurring the most

probable peril of having our throats cut. Leave it, therefore, to me to procure his release as soon as possible,—probably to-morrow; and let us now quietly retire, content with what we have yet got."

Hitherto I had implicitly obeyed Job: it was now *my* turn to command. "Look you," said I, calmly but sternly; "I have come into this house under your guidance, solely to procure the evidence of that man: the evidence he has as yet given may not be worth a straw; and, since I have ventured among the knives of your associates, it shall be for some purpose. I tell you fairly that, whether you befriend or betray me, I will either leave these walls with Dawson or remain in them a corpse."

"You are a bold blade, sir," said Jonson, who seemed rather to respect than resent the determination of my tone, "and we will see what can be done: wait here, your honour, while I go down to see if the boys are gone to bed, and the coast is clear."

Job descended, and I re-entered Dawson's room. When I told him that we were resolved, if possible, to effect his escape, nothing could exceed his transport and gratitude; this was, indeed, expressed in so mean and servile a manner, mixed with so many petty threats of vengeance against Thornton, that I could scarcely conceal my disgust.

Jonson returned, and beckoned me out of the room.

"They are all in bed, sir," said he,—"Bess as well as the rest; indeed, the old girl has lushed so well at the bingo that she sleeps as if her next morrow was the day of judgment. I have, also, seen that the street door is still unbarred; so that, upon the whole, we have, perhaps, as good a chance to-night as we may ever have again. All my fear is about that cowardly lubber. I have left both Bess's doors wide open, so we have nothing to do but to creep through; as for me, I am an old file, and could steal my way through a sick man's room like a sunbeam through a keyhole."

"Well," said I, in the same strain, "I am no elephant, and my dancing-master used to tell me I might tread on a butterfly's wing without brushing off a tint [poor Coulon! he little

thought of the use his lessons would be to me hereafter!]; so let us be quick, Master Job."

"Stop," said Jonson; "I have yet a ceremony to perform with our caged bird. I must put a fresh gag on his mouth: for though, if he escapes, I must leave England, perhaps forever, for fear of the jolly boys, and, therefore, care not what he blabs about me; yet there are a few fine fellows amongst the club whom I would not have hurt for the Indies; so I shall make Master Dawson take *our last oath;* the devil himself would not break that, I think! Your honour will stay outside the door; for we can have no witness while it is administered."

Job then entered: I stood without; in a few minutes I heard Dawson's voice in the accents of supplication. Soon after Job returned. "The craven dog won't take the oath," said he, "and may my right hand rot above ground before it shall turn key for him unless he does." But when Dawson saw that Job had left the room, and withdrawn the light, the conscience-stricken coward came to the door, and implored Job to return. "Will you swear, then?" said Jonson. "I will, I will," was the answer.

Job then re-entered; minutes passed away: Job re-appeared, and Dawson was dressed and clinging hold of him. "All's right!" said he to me with a satisfied air.

The oath had been taken: what, it was I know not; *but it was never broken.*[1]

Dawson and Job went first; I followed; we passed the passage, and came to the chamber of the sleeping Mrs. Brimstone. Job bent eagerly forward to listen before we entered; he took hold of Dawson's arm, and, beckoning me to follow, stole, with a step that the blind mole would not have heard, across the room. Carefully did the practised thief veil the candle he carried with his hand, as he now began to pass by the bed.

I saw that Dawson trembled like a leaf, and the palpitation of his limbs made his step audible and heavy. Just as they had half-way passed the bed I turned my look on Brimstone

[1] Those conversant with the annals of Newgate well know how religiously the oaths of these fearful freemasonries are kept.

Bess, and observed with a shuddering thrill her eyes slowly open, and fix upon the form of my companions. Dawson's gaze had been bent in the same direction, and when he met the full glassy stare of the beldame's eyes he uttered a faint scream. This completed our danger; had it not been for that exclamation, Bess might, in the uncertain vision of drowsiness, have passed over the third person, and fancied it was only myself and Jonson, in our way from Dawson's apartment; but no sooner had her ear caught the sound than she started up and sat erect on her bed, gazing at us in mingled wrath and astonishment.

That was a fearful moment; we stood riveted to the spot! "Oh, my kiddies," cried Bess, at last finding speech, "you are in Queer Street, I trow! Plant your stumps, Master Guinea Pig! you are going to stall off the Daw's baby in prime twig, eh? But Bess stags you, my cove! Bess stags you."[1]

Jonson looked irresolute for one instant; but the next he had decided. "Run, run," cried he, "for your lives:" and he and Dawson (to whom fear did indeed lend wings) were out of the room in an instant. I lost no time in following their example; but the vigilant and incensed hag was too quick for me; she pulled violently the bell, on which she had already placed her hand: the alarm rang like an echo in a cavern: below — around — far — near — from wall to wall — from chamber to chamber, the sound seemed multiplied and repeated! and in the same breathing-point of time she sprang from her bed, and seized me, just as I had reached the door.

"On, on, on," cried Jonson's voice to Dawson, as they had already gained the passage, and left the whole room and the staircase beyond in utter darkness.

With a firm, muscular, nervous gripe, which almost showed a masculine strength, the hag clung to my throat and breast; behind, among some of the numerous rooms in the passage we had left, I heard sounds which told too plainly how rapidly the alarm had spread. A door opened; steps approached;

[1] "Halt, Master Guinea Pig; you are going to steal Dawson away, eh? But Bess sees you, my man! Bess sees you!"

my fate seemed fixed: but despair gave me energy; it was no time for the ceremonials due to the *beau sexe*. I dashed Bess to the ground, tore myself from her relaxing grasp, and fled down the steps with all the precipitation the darkness would allow. I gained the passage, at the far end of which hung the lamp, now weak and waning in its socket, which, it will be remembered, burnt close by the sick man's chamber that I had so unintentionally entered. A thought flashed upon my mind, and lent me new nerves and fresh speed; I flew along the passage, guided by the dying light. The staircase I had left shook with the footsteps of my pursuers. I was at the door of the sick thief; I burst it open; seized the sword as it lay within reach on the chair, where Jonson had placed it, and feeling, at the touch of the familiar weapon, as if the might of ten men had been transferred to my single arm, I bounded down the stairs before me; passed the door at the bottom, which Dawson had fortunately left open; flung it back almost upon the face of my advancing enemies, and found myself in the long passage which led to the street door, in safety, but in the thickest darkness. A light flashed from a door to the left; the door was that of the "Common-room" which we had first entered; it opened, and Spider-shanks, with one of his comrades, looked forth, the former holding a light. I darted by them, and, guided by their lamp, fled along the passage and reached the door. Imagine my dismay — when, either through accident, or by the desire of my fugitive companions to impede pursuit, I found it unexpectedly closed!

The two villains had now come up to me; close at their heels were two more, probably my pursuers from the upper apartments. Providentially the passage was (as I before said) extremely narrow, and as long as no firearms were used, nor a general rush resorted to, I had little doubt of being able to keep the ruffians at bay, until I had hit upon the method of springing the latch, and so winning my escape from the house.

While my left hand was employed in feeling the latch, I made such good use of my right as to keep my antagonists

at a safe distance. The one who was nearest to me was Fib Fakescrew; he was armed with a weapon exactly similar to my own. The whole passage rang with oaths and threats. "Crash the cull! down with him! down with him before he dubs the jigger! Tip him the degan, Fib, fake him through and through! if he pikes, we shall all be scragged."[1]

Hitherto, in the confusion, I had not been able to recall Job's instructions in opening the latch; at last I remembered, and pressed the screw; the latch rose; I opened the door, but not wide enough to escape through the aperture. The ruffians saw my escape at hand. "Rush the b—— cove! rush him!" cried the loud voice of one behind; and, at the word, Fib was thrown forwards upon the extended edge of my blade; scarcely with an effort of my own arm the sword entered his bosom, and he fell at my feet bathed in blood; the motion which the men thought would prove my destruction became my salvation; staggered by the fall of their companion they gave way; I seized advantage of the momentary confusion, — threw open the door, and, mindful of Job's admonition, *turned to the right* and fled onwards, with a rapidity which baffled and mocked pursuit.

CHAPTER LXXXIV.

ILLE viam secat ad naves sociosque revisit. — VIRGIL.

THE day had already dawned, but all was still and silent; my footsteps smote the solitary pavement with a strange and unanswered sound. Nevertheless, though all pursuit had long ceased, I still continued to run on mechanically, till, faint and breathless, I was forced to pause. I looked round, but could recognize nothing familiar in the narrow and filthy streets; even the names of them were to me like an unknown

[1] "Kill the fellow! down with him before he opens the door! Stab him through and through! if he gets off, we shall all be hanged."

language. After a brief rest I renewed my wanderings and at length came to an alley called River Lane; the name did not deceive me, but brought me, after a short walk, to the Thames; there, to my inexpressible joy, I discovered a solitary boatman, and transported myself forthwith to the Whitehall Stairs.

Never, I ween, did gay gallant, in the decaying part of the season, arrive at those stairs for the sweet purpose of accompanying his own mistress or another's wife to green Richmond or sunny Hampton with more eager and animated delight than I felt when rejecting the arm of the rough boatman and leaping on the well-known stones. I hastened to that stand of "jarvies" which has often been the hope and shelter of belated member of St. Stephen's, or bewetted fugitive from the Opera, startled a sleeping coachman, flung myself into his vehicle, and descended at Mivart's.

The drowsy porter surveyed and told me to be gone; I had forgotten till then my strange attire. "Pooh, my friend," said I, "may not Mr. Pelham go to a masquerade as well as his betters?" My voice and words undeceived my Cerberus, and I was admitted; I hastened to bed, and no sooner had I laid my head on my pillow than I fell fast asleep. It must be confessed that I had deserved "tired Nature's sweet restorer."

I had not been above a couple of hours in the land of dreams, when I was awakened by some one grasping my arm: the events of the past night were so fresh in my memory that I sprang up as if the knife was at my throat: my eyes opened upon the peaceful countenance of Mr. Job Jonson.

"Thank Heaven, sir, you are safe! I had but a very faint hope of finding you here when I came."

"Why," said I, rubbing my eyes, "it is very true that I am safe, honest Job: but I believe I have few thanks to give *you* for a circumstance so peculiarly agreeable to myself. It would have saved me much trouble, and your worthy friend, Mr. Fib Fakescrew, some pain, if you had left the door open, instead of shutting me up with your *club*, as you are pleased to call it!"

"Very true, sir," said Job, "and I am extremely sorry at

the accident; it was Dawson who shut the door, through utter unconsciousness, though I told him especially not to do it: the poor dog did not know whether he was on his head or his heels."

"You have got him safe?" said I, quickly.

"Ay, trust me for that, your honour. I have locked him up at home while I came here to look for you."

"We will lose no time in transferring him to safer custody," said I, leaping out of bed; "but be off to —— Street directly."

"Slow and sure, sir," answered Jonson. "It is for you to do whatever you please, but my part of the business is over. I shall sleep at Dover to-night, and breakfast at Calais to-morrow. Perhaps it will not be very inconvenient to your honour to furnish me with my first quarter's annuity in advance, and to see that the rest is duly paid into Lafitte's at Paris, for the use of Captain de Courcy. Where I shall live hereafter is at present uncertain; but I dare say there will be few corners except old England and *new* England in which I shall not make merry on your honour's bounty."

"Pooh! my good fellow," rejoined I, "never desert a country to which your talents do such credit; stay here, and reform on your annuity. If ever I can accomplish my own wishes, I will consult yours still further; for I shall always think of your services with gratitude,—though you *did* shut the door in my face."

"No, sir," replied Job: "life is a blessing I would fain enjoy a few years longer; and, at present, my sojourn in England would put it wofully in danger of '*club law*.' Besides, I begin to think that a good character is a very agreeable thing when not too troublesome: and as I have none left in England, I may as well make the experiment abroad. If your honour will call at the magistrate's, and take a warrant and an officer, for the purpose of ridding me of my charge, at the very instant I see my responsibility at an end I will have the honour of bidding you adieu."

"Well, as you please," said I. "Curse your scoundrel's cosmetics! How the deuce am I ever to regain my natural

complexion? Look ye, sirrah! you have painted me with a long wrinkle on the left side of my mouth, big enough to engulf all the beauty I ever had. Why, water seems to have no effect upon it!"

"To be sure not, sir," said Job, calmly — "I should be but a poor dauber if my paints washed off with a wet sponge."

"Grant me patience!" cried I, in a real panic: "how, in the name of Heaven, *are* they to wash off? Am I, before I have reached my twenty-third year, to look like a Methodist parson on the wrong side of forty, you rascal?"

"The latter question your honour can best answer," returned Job. "With regard to the former, I have an unguent here, if you will suffer me to apply it, which will remove all other colours than those which Nature has bestowed upon you."

With that, Job produced a small box; and, after a brief submission to his skill, I had the ineffable joy of beholding myself restored to my original state. Nevertheless, my delight was somewhat checked by the loss of my curls: I thanked Heaven, however, that the damage had been sustained *after* Ellen's acceptation of my addresses. A lover confined to one should not be too destructive, for fear of the consequences to the remainder of the female world: compassion is ever due to the fair sex.

My toilet being concluded, Jonson and I repaired to the magistrate's. He waited at the corner of the street, while I entered the house —

> "'T were vain to tell what shook the holy man,
> Who looked, not lovingly, at that divan."

Having summoned to my aid the redoubted Mr. ——, of mulberry-cheeked recollection, we entered a hackney-coach, and drove to Jonson's lodgings, Job mounting guard on the box.

"I think, sir," said Mr. ——, looking up at the man of two virtues, "that I have had the pleasure of seeing that gentleman before."

"Very likely," said I; "he is a young man greatly about town."

When we had safely lodged Dawson (who seemed more collected, and even courageous than I had expected) in the coach, Job beckoned me into a little parlour. I signed him a draft on my bankers for one hundred pounds,—though at that time it was like letting the last drop from my veins,—and faithfully promised, should Dawson's evidence procure the desired end (of which indeed there was now no doubt), that the annuity should be regularly paid as he desired. We then took an affectionate farewell of each other.

"Adieu, sir!" said Job, "I depart into a new world,—that of honest men!"

"If so," said I, "adieu indeed! for on this earth we shall never meet again!"

We returned to —— Street. As I was descending from the coach, a female, wrapped from head to foot in a cloak, came eagerly up to me, and seized me by the arm. "For God's sake," said she, in a low, hurried voice, "come aside, and speak to me for a single moment." Consigning Dawson to the sole charge of the officer, I did as I was desired. When we had got some paces down the street, the female stopped. Though she held her veil closely drawn over her face, her voice and air were not to be mistaken. I knew her at once. "Glanville," said she with great agitation, "Sir Reginald Glanville; tell me, is he in real danger?" She stopped short; she could say no more.

"I trust not!" said I, appearing not to recognize the speaker.

"I trust not!" she repeated; "is that all?" And then the passionate feelings of her sex overcoming every other consideration, she seized me by the hand, and said,—"Oh, Mr. Pelham, for mercy's sake, tell me, is he in the power of that villain Thornton? You need disguise nothing from me; I know all the fatal history."

"Compose yourself, dear, dear Lady Roseville," said I, soothingly; "for it is in vain any longer to affect not to know you. Glanville *is* safe; I have brought with me a witness whose testimony *must* release him."

"God bless you, God bless you!" said Lady Roseville, and she burst into tears; but she dried them directly, and, recov-

ering some portion of that dignity which never long forsakes a woman of virtuous and educated mind, she resumed, proudly, yet bitterly,—"It is no ordinary motive, no motive which you might reasonably impute to me, that has brought me here. Sir Reginald Glanville can never be anything more to me than a friend,—but, of all friends, the most known and valued. I learned from his servant of his disappearance; and my acquaintance with his secret history enabled me to account for it in the most fearful manner. In short, I—I—but explanations are idle now; you will never say that you have seen me here, Mr. Pelham: you will endeavour even to forget it; farewell."

Lady Roseville, then drawing her cloak closely round her, left me with a fleet and light step, and, turning the corner of the street, disappeared.

I returned to my charge: I demanded an immediate interview with the magistrate. "I have come," said I, "to redeem my pledge, and procure the acquittal of the innocent." I then briefly related my adventures, only concealing (according to my promise) all description of my helpmate, Job; and prepared the worthy magistrate for the confession and testimony of Dawson. That unhappy man had just concluded his narration, when an officer entered, and whispered the magistrate that Thornton was in waiting.

"Admit him," said Mr. ——, aloud. Thornton entered with his usual easy and swaggering air of effrontery; but no sooner did he set his eyes upon Dawson than a deadly and withering change passed over his countenance. Dawson could not bridle the cowardly petulance of his spite. "They know all, Thornton!" said he, with a look of triumph. The villain turned slowly from him to us, muttering something we could not hear. He saw upon my face, upon the magistrate's, that his doom was sealed: his desperation gave him presence of mind, and he made a sudden rush to the door;—the officers in waiting seized him. Why should I detail the rest of the scene? He was that day fully committed for trial, and Sir Reginald Glanville honourably released and unhesitatingly acquitted.

CHAPTER LXXXV.

Un hymen qu'on souhaite
Entre les gens comme nous est chose bientôt faite,
Je te veux; me veux-tu de même? — Molière.

So may he rest, his faults lie gently on him. — Shakspeare.

The main interest of my adventures — if, indeed, I may flatter myself that they ever contained any — is now over: the mystery is explained, the innocent acquitted, and the guilty condemned. Moreover, all obstacles between the marriage of the unworthy hero with the peerless heroine being removed, it would be but an idle prolixity to linger over the preliminary details of an orthodox and customary courtship. Nor is it for me to dilate upon the exaggerated expressions of gratitude in which the affectionate heart of Glanville found vent for my fortunate exertions on his behalf. He was not willing that any praise to which I might be entitled for them should be lost. He narrated to Lady Glanville and Ellen my adventures with the comrades of the worthy Job; from the lips of the mother, and the eyes of the dear sister, came my sweetest addition to the good fortune which had made me the instrument of Glanville's safety and acquittal. I was not condemned to a long protraction of that time, which, if it be justly termed the happiest of our lives, *we* (namely, all true lovers), through that perversity common to human nature, most ardently wish to terminate.

On that day month which saw Glanville's release my bridals were appointed. Reginald was even more eager than myself in pressing for an early day; firmly persuaded that his end was rapidly approaching, his most prevailing desire was to witness our union. This wish, and the interest he took in our happiness, gave him an energy and animation which impressed us with the deepest hopes for his ultimate recovery;

and the fatal disease to which he was a prey nursed the fondness of our hearts by the bloom of cheek and brightness of eye with which it veiled its desolating and gathering progress.

From the eventful day on which I had seen Lady Roseville in —— Street, we had not met. She had shut herself up in her splendid home, and the newspapers teemed with regret at the reported illness and certain seclusion of one whose *fêtes* and gayeties had furnished them with their brightest pages. The only one admitted to her was Ellen. To her she had for some time made no secret of her attachment; and from her the daily news of Sir Reginald's health was ascertained. Several times, when at a late hour I left Glanville's apartments, I passed the figure of a woman, closely muffled, and apparently watching before his windows — which, owing to the advance of summer, were never closed — to catch, perhaps, a view of his room, or a passing glimpse of his emaciated and fading figure. If that sad and lonely vigil was kept by her whom I suspected, deep indeed, and mighty was the love which could so humble the heart and possess the spirit of the haughty and high-born Countess of Roseville!

I turn to a very different personage in this *véritable histoire.* My father and mother were absent at Lady H——'s when my marriage was fixed; to both of them I wrote for their approbation of my choice. From Lady Frances I received the answer which I subjoin: —

My Dearest Son, — Your father desires me to add his congratulations to mine, upon the election you have made. I shall hasten to London, to be present at the ceremony. Although you must not be offended with me if I say that with your person, accomplishments, birth, and (above all) high *ton,* you might have chosen among the loftiest and wealthiest families in the country, yet I am by no means displeased or disappointed with your future wife. To say nothing of the antiquity of her name (the Glanvilles intermarried with the Pelhams in the reign of Henry II.), it is a great step to future distinction to marry a beauty, especially one so celebrated as Miss Glanville, — perhaps it is among the surest ways to the cabinet. The forty thousand pounds which you say Miss Glanville is to receive make, to be sure, but a slender income; though, when added to your own fortune, that sum in ready money

would have been a great addition to the Glenmorris property, if your uncle — I have no patience with him — had not married again.

However, you will lose no time in getting into the House; at all events, the capital will insure your return for a borough, and maintain you comfortably till you are in the Administration; when of course it matters very little what your fortune may be; tradesmen will be too happy to have your name in their books: be sure, therefore, that the money is not tied up. Miss Glanville must see that her own interest, as well as yours, is concerned in your having the unfettered disposal of a fortune which, if restricted, you would find it impossible to live upon. Pray, how is Sir Reginald Glanville? Is his cough as bad as ever? By the by, how is his property entailed?

Will you order Stonor to have the house ready for us on Friday, when I shall return home in time for dinner? Let me again congratulate you most sincerely on your choice. I always thought you had more common-sense, as well as genius, than any young man I ever knew: you have shown it in this important step. Domestic happiness, my dearest Henry, ought to be peculiarly sought for by every Englishman, however elevated his station; and when I reflect upon Miss Glanville's qualifications, and her celebrity as a beauty, I have no doubt of your possessing the felicity you deserve. But be sure that the fortune is not settled away from you; poor Sir Reginald is not (I believe) at all covetous or worldly, and will not, therefore, insist upon the point. God bless you, and grant you every happiness.

Ever, my dear Henry, your very affectionate mother,

F. Pelham.

P. S. I think it will be better to give out that Miss Glanville has *eighty* thousand pounds. Be sure, therefore, that you do not contradict me.

The days, the weeks flew away. Ah, happy days! yet I do not regret while I recall you! He that loves much fears even in his best-founded hopes. What were the anxious longings for a treasure — in my view only, not in my possession — to the deep joy of finding it forever my own?

The day arrived; I was yet at my toilet, and Bedos, in the greatest confusion (poor fellow, he was as happy as myself!), when a letter was brought me stamped with the foreign postmark. It was from the exemplary Job Jonson; and though I did not even open it on that day, yet it shall be more favoured

by the reader, — that is, if he will not pass over, without reading, the following effusion: —

RUE DES MOULINS, No. ——, PARIS.

HONOURED SIR, — I arrived in Paris safely; and, reading in the English papers the full success of our enterprise, as well as in the "Morning Post" of the —th your approaching marriage with Miss Glanville, I cannot refrain from the liberty of congratulating you upon both, as well as of reminding you of the exact day on which the first quarter of my annuity will be due; — it is the —— of ——; for I presume your honour kindly made me a present of the draft for one hundred pounds, in order to pay my travelling expenses.

I find that the boys are greatly incensed against me; but, as Dawson was too much bound by his oath to betray a tittle against them, I trust I shall ultimately pacify the club and return to England. A true patriot, sir, never loves to leave his native country. Even were I compelled to visit Van Diemen's Land, the ties of birthplace would be so strong as to induce me to seize the first opportunity of returning! I am not, your honour, very fond of the French: they are an idle, frivolous, penurious, *poor* nation. Only think, sir, the other day I saw a gentleman of the most noble air secrete something at a *café*, which I could not clearly discern: as he wrapped it carefully in paper, before he placed it in his pocket, I judged that it was a silver cream-ewer at least; accordingly, I followed him out, and from pure curiosity — I do assure your honour it was from no other motive — I transferred this purloined treasure to my own pocket. You will imagine, sir, the interest with which I hastened to a lonely spot in the Tuileries, and, carefully taking out the little packet, unfolded paper by paper, till I came to — yes, sir, till I came to — *five lumps of sugar!* Oh, the French are a mean people, — a very mean people: I hope I shall soon be able to return to England. Meanwhile, I am going into Holland, to see how those rich burghers spend their time and their money. I suppose poor Dawson, as well as the rascal Thornton, will be hung before you receive this; they deserve it richly: it is such fellows who disgrace the profession. He is but a very poor bungler who is forced to cut throats as well as pockets. And now, your honour, wishing you all happiness with your lady,

I beg to remain, your very obedient humble Servant,

FERDINAND DE COURCY, etc.

Struck with the joyous countenance of my honest valet, as I took my gloves and hat from his hand, I could not help

wishing to bestow upon him a blessing similar to that I was about to possess. "Bedos," said I, "Bedos, my good fellow, you left your wife to come to me; you shall not suffer by your fidelity: send for her; we will find room for her in our future establishment."

The smiling face of the Frenchman underwent a rapid change. "*Ma foi,*" said he, in his own tongue; "Monsieur is too good. An excess of happiness hardens the heart; and so, for fear of forgetting my gratitude to Providence, I will, with Monsieur's permission, suffer my adored wife to remain where she is."

After so pious a reply, I should have been worse than wicked had I pressed the matter any further.

I found all ready at Berkeley Square. Lady Glanville is one of those good persons who think a marriage out of church is no marriage at all; to church, therefore, we went. Although Reginald was now so reduced that he could scarcely support the least fatigue, he insisted on giving Ellen away. He was that morning, and had been for the last two or three days, considerably better, and our happiness seemed to grow less selfish in our increasing hope of his recovery.

When we returned from church, our intention was to set off immediately to —— Hall, a seat which I had hired for our reception. On re-entering the house, Glanville called me aside; I followed his infirm and tremulous steps into a private apartment.

"Pelham," said he, "we shall never meet again! No matter: *you* are now happy, and I shall shortly be so. But there is one office I have yet to request from your friendship; when I am dead, let me be buried by *her* side, and let one tombstone cover both."

I pressed his hand, and with tears in my eyes made him the promise he required.

"It is enough," he said; "I have no further business with life. God bless you, my friend — my brother; do not let a thought of me cloud your happiness."

He rose, and we turned to quit the room: Glanville was leaning on my arm; when he had moved a few paces towards

the door, he stopped abruptly. Imagining that the cause proceeded from pain or debility, I turned my eyes upon his countenance: a fearful and convulsive change was rapidly passing over it; his eyes stared wildly upon vacancy.

"Merciful God — is it — can it be?" he said, in a low, inward tone.

Before I could speak, I felt his hand relax its grasp upon my arm: he fell upon the floor; I raised him; a smile of ineffable serenity and peace was upon his lips; his face was the face of an angel, but the spirit had passed away!

CHAPTER LXXXVI.

Now haveth good day, good men all,
Haveth good day, yong and old;
Haveth good day, both great and small,
And graunt merci a thousand fold!
Gif ever I might full fain I wold,
Don ought that were unto your leve,
Christ keep you out of carès cold,
For now 't is time to take my leave. — *Old Song.*

Several months have now elapsed since my marriage. I am living quietly in the country, among my books, and looking forward with calmness, rather than impatience, to the time which shall again bring me before the world. Marriage with me is not that sepulchre of all human hope and energy which it often is with others. I am not more partial to my arm-chair, nor more averse to shaving, than of yore. I do not bound my prospects to the dinner-hour, nor my projects to "migrations from the blue bed to the brown." Matrimony found me ambitious; it has not cured me of the passion: but it has concentrated what was scattered, and determined what was vague. If I am less anxious than formerly for the reputation to be acquired in society, I am more eager for honour

in the world; and, instead of amusing my enemies and the saloon, I trust yet to be useful to my friends and to mankind.

Whether this is a hope altogether vain and idle; whether I have, in the self-conceit common to all men (thou wilt perchance add, peculiarly prominent in myself!) overrated both the power and the integrity of my mind (for the one is bootless without the other), neither I nor the world can yet tell. "Time," says one of the Fathers, "is the only touchstone which distinguishes the prophet from the boaster."

Meanwhile, gentle reader, during the two years which I purpose devoting to solitude and study, I shall not be so occupied with my fields and folios as to become uncourteous to thee. If ever thou hast known me in the city, I give thee a hearty invitation to come and visit me in the country. I promise thee that my wines and viands shall not disgrace the companion of Guloseton, nor my conversation be much duller than my book. I will compliment thee on thy horses; thou shalt congratulate me upon my wife. Over old wine we will talk over new events; and, if we flag at the latter, why, we will make ourselves amends with the former. In short, if thou art neither very silly nor very wise, it shall be thine own fault if we are not excellent friends.

I feel that it would be but poor courtesy in me, after having kept company with Lord Vincent through the tedious journey of these pages, to dismiss him now without one word of valediction. May he, in the political course he has adopted, find all the admiration which his talents deserve; and if ever we meet as foes, let our heaviest weapon be a quotation, and our bitterest vengeance a jest.

Lord Guloseton regularly corresponds with me, and his last letter contained a promise to visit me in the course of the month, in order to recover his appetite (which has been much relaxed of late) by the country air.

My uncle wrote to me, three weeks since, announcing the death of the infant Lady Glenmorris had brought him. Sincerely do I wish that his loss may be supplied. I have already sufficient fortune for my wants, and sufficient *hope* for my desires.

Thornton died as he had lived,—the reprobate and the ruffian. "Pooh," said he, in his quaint brutality, to the worthy clergyman who attended his last moments with more zeal than success; "pooh, what 's the difference between gospel and go—spell? we agree like a bell and its clapper,—you 're prating while I 'm *hanging*."

Dawson died in prison, penitent and in peace. Cowardice, which spoils the honest man, often redeems the knave.

From Lord Dawton I have received a letter, requesting me to accept a borough (in his gift) just vacated. It is a pity that generosity—such a prodigal to those who do not want it—should often be such a niggard to those who do. I need not specify my answer. I hope yet to teach Lord Dawton that to forgive the minister is not to forget the affront. Meanwhile I am content to bury myself in my retreat, with my mute teachers of logic and legislation, in order, hereafter, to justify his lordship's good opinion of my abilities. Farewell, Brutus, we shall meet at Philippi!

It is some months since Lady Roseville left England; the last news we received of her informed us that she was living at Sienna, in utter seclusion and very infirm health.

> "The day drags thro', though storms keep out the sun,
> And thus the heart will break, yet brokenly live on."

Poor Lady Glanville! the mother of one so beautiful, so gifted, and so lost. What can I say of her which "you, and you, and you—" all who are parents, cannot feel, a thousand times more acutely, in those recesses of the heart too deep for words or tears? There are yet many hours in which I find the sister of the departed in grief that even her husband cannot console: and I—*I*—my friend, my brother, have I forgotten thee in death? I lay down the pen, I turn from my employment; thy dog is at my feet, and looking at me, as if conscious of my thoughts, with an eye almost as tearful as my own.

But it is not thus that I will part from my Reader; our greeting was not in sorrow, neither shall be our adieus. For thee, who hast gone with me through the motley course of

my confessions, I would fain trust that I have sometimes hinted at thy instruction, when only appearing to strive for thy amusement. But on this I will not dwell; for the moral *insisted upon* often loses its effect; and all that I will venture to hope is, that I have opened to thee one true, and not utterly hackneyed, page in the various and mighty volume of mankind. In this busy and restless world I have not been a vague speculator nor an idle actor. While all around me were vigilant, I have not laid me down to sleep,—even for the luxury of a poet's dream. Like the schoolboy, I have considered study *as* study, but action as delight.

Nevertheless, whatever I have seen or heard or felt has been treasured in my memory, and brooded over by my thoughts. I now place the result before you,—

> "Sicut meus est mos,
> Nescio quid meditans nugarum;—

but not, perhaps,

> —"totus in illis."[1]

Whatever society—whether in a higher or lower grade—I have portrayed, my sketches have been taken rather as a witness than a copyist; for I have never shunned that circle, nor that individual, which presented life in a fresh view or man in a new relation. It is right, however, that I should add that, as I have not wished to be an individual satirist, rather than a general observer, I have, occasionally, in the subordinate characters (such as Russelton and Gordon), taken only the outline from truth, and filled up the colours at my leisure and my will.[2]

[1] "According to my custom, meditating, I scarcely know what, of trifles; but not, perhaps, wholly wrapt in them."

[2] May the Author, as well as the Hero, be permitted, upon this point, to solicit attention and belief? In all the lesser characters, of which the first *idea* was taken from life, especially those referred to in the text, he has, for reasons perhaps obvious enough without the tedium of recital, *purposely* introduced sufficient variation and addition to remove, in his own opinion, the odium either of a copy or of a caricature. The Author thinks it the more necessary *in the present* edition to insist upon this, with all honest and sincere

With regard to myself I have been more candid. I have not only shown — *non parca manu* — my faults, but (grant that this is a much rarer exposure) my *foibles;* and, in my anxiety for your entertainment, I have not grudged you the pleasure of a laugh, even at my own expense. Forgive me, then, if I am not a fashionable hero, — forgive me if I have not wept over a "*blighted spirit,*" nor boasted of a "*British heart;*" and allow that a man who, in these days of alternate Werthers and Worthies, is neither the one nor the other, is, at least, a novelty in print, though, I fear, common enough in life.

And now, my kind reader, having remembered the proverb, and in saying one word to thee having said two for myself, I will no longer detain thee. Whatever thou mayest think of me, and my thousand faults, both as an author and a man, believe me it is with a sincere and affectionate wish for the accomplishment of my parting words, that I bid thee — *farewell!*

earnestness, because *in the first* it was too much the custom of criticism to judge of his sketches from a resemblance to some supposed originals, and not from adherence to that sole source of all legitimate imitation, — Nature; Nature as exhibited in the general mass, not in the isolated instance. It is the duty of the novelist rather to abstract than to copy: all humours, all individual peculiarities, are his appropriate and fair materials; not so are the *humourist* and the *individual!* Observation should resemble the eastern bird, and, while it nourishes itself upon the suction of a *thousand* flowers, never be seen to settle upon *one!*

THE END.

EUGENE ARAM

TO SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.,

ETC., ETC.

SIR, — It has long been my ambition to add some humble tribute to the offerings laid upon the shrine of your genius. At each succeeding book that I have given to the world, I have paused to consider if it were worthy to be inscribed with your great name, and at each I have played the procrastinator, and hoped for that morrow of better desert which never came. But *defluat amnis*, — the time runs on; and I am tired of waiting for the ford which the tides refuse. I seize, then, the present opportunity, not as the best, but as the only one I can be sure of commanding, to express that affectionate admiration with which you have inspired me in common with all your contemporaries, and which a French writer has not ungracefully termed "the happiest prerogative of genius." As a Poet and as a Novelist your fame has attained to that height in which praise has become superfluous; but in the character of the writer there seems to me a yet higher claim to veneration than in that of the writings. The example your genius sets us, who can emulate? The example your moderation bequeaths to us, who shall forget? That nature must indeed be gentle which has conciliated the envy that pursues intellectual greatness, and left without an enemy a man who has no living equal in renown.

You have gone for a while from the scenes you have immortalized, to regain, we trust, the health which has been impaired by your noble labors or by the manly struggles with adverse fortunes which have not found the frame as indomitable as the mind. Take with you the prayers of all whom your genius, with playful art, has soothed in sickness, or has strengthened, with generous precepts, against the calamities of life.[1]

> "Navis quæ tibi creditum
> Debes Virgilium . . .
> Reddas incolumem!"[2]

[1] Written at the time of Sir W. Scott's visit to Italy, after the great blow to his health and fortunes.

[2] "O ship, thou owest to us Virgil! Restore in safety him whom we intrusted to thee."

You, I feel assured, will not deem it presumptuous in one who, to that bright and undying flame which now streams from the gray hills of Scotland, — the last halo with which you have crowned her literary glories, — has turned from his first childhood with a deep and unrelaxing devotion; you, I feel assured, will not deem it presumptuous in him to inscribe an idle work with your illustrious name, — a work which, however worthless in itself, assumes something of value in his eyes when thus rendered a tribute of respect to you.

THE AUTHOR OF "EUGENE ARAM."

LONDON, December 22, 1831.

PREFACE

TO THE EDITION OF 1831.

SINCE, dear Reader, I last addressed thee, in "Paul Clifford," nearly two years have elapsed, and somewhat more than four years since, in "Pelham," our familiarity first began. The Tale which I now submit to thee differs equally from the last as from the first of those works; for of the two evils, perhaps it is even better to disappoint thee in a new style than to weary thee with an old. With the facts on which the tale of "Eugene Aram" is founded, I have exercised the common and fair license of writers of fiction: it is chiefly the more homely parts of the real story that have been altered; and for what I have added, and what omitted, I have the sanction of all established authorities, who have taken greater liberties with characters yet more recent, and far more protected by historical recollections. The book was, for the most part, written in the early part of the year, when the interest which the task created in the Author was undivided by other subjects of excitement, and he had leisure enough not only to be *nescio quid meditans nugarum*, but also to be *totus in illis*.[1]

I originally intended to adapt the story of Eugene Aram to the Stage. That design was abandoned when more than half completed; but I wished to impart to this Romance something of the nature of Tragedy, — something of the

[1] "Not only to be meditating I know not what of trifles, but also to be wholly engaged on them."

more transferable of its qualities. Enough of this: it is not the Author's wishes, but the Author's books that the world will judge him by. Perhaps, then (with this I conclude), in the dull monotony of public affairs, and in these long winter evenings, when we gather round the fire, prepared for the gossip's tale, willing to indulge the fear and to believe the legend, perhaps, dear Reader, thou mayest turn, not reluctantly, even to these pages, for at least a newer excitement than the Cholera, or for momentary relief from the everlasting discussion on "the Bill."[1]

LONDON, December 22, 1831.

[1] The year of the Reform Bill.

PREFACE

TO THE EDITION OF 1840.

THE strange history of Eugene Aram had excited my interest and wonder long before the present work was composed or conceived. It so happened that during Aram's residence at Lynn his reputation for learning had attracted the notice of my grandfather, — a country gentleman living in the same county, and of more intelligence and accomplishments than, at that day, usually characterized his class. Aram frequently visited at Heydon (my grandfather's house), and gave lessons — probably in no very elevated branches of erudition — to the younger members of the family. This I chanced to hear when I was on a visit in Norfolk some two years before this novel was published; and it tended to increase the interest with which I had previously speculated on the phenomena of a trial which, take it altogether, is perhaps the most remarkable in the register of English crime. I endeavored to collect such anecdotes of Aram's life and manners as tradition and hearsay still kept afloat. These anecdotes were so far uniform that they all concurred in representing him as a person who, till the detection of the crime for which he was sentenced, had appeared of the mildest character and the most unexceptionable morals. An invariable gentleness and patience in his mode of tuition — qualities then very uncommon at school — had made him so beloved by his pupils at Lynn that, in after life, there was scarcely one of them who did not persist in the belief of his innocence.

His personal and moral peculiarities, as described in these pages, are such as were related to me by persons who had heard him described by his contemporaries, — the calm, benign countenance; the delicate health; the thoughtful stoop; the noiseless step; the custom, not uncommon with scholars and absent men, of muttering to himself; a singular eloquence in conversation, when once roused from silence; an active tenderness and charity to the poor, with whom he was always ready to share his own scanty means; an apparent disregard for money, except when employed in the purchase of books; an utter indifference to the ambition usually accompanying self-taught talent, whether to better the condition or to increase the repute: these, and other traits of the character portrayed in the novel, are, as far as I can rely on my information, faithful to the features of the original.

That a man thus described — so benevolent that he would rob his own necessities to administer to those of another, so humane that he would turn aside from the worm in his path — should have been guilty of the foulest of human crimes, namely, murder for the sake of gain; that a crime thus committed should have been so episodical and apart from the rest of his career that, however it might rankle in his conscience, it should never have hardened his nature; that through a life of some duration, none of the errors, none of the vices, which would seem essentially to belong to a character capable of a deed so black, from motives apparently so sordid,[1] should have been discovered or suspected, — all this presents an anomaly in human conduct so rare and surprising that it would be difficult to find any subject more adapted for that

[1] For I put wholly out of question the excuse of jealousy, as unsupported by any evidence, never hinted at by Aram himself (at least on any sufficient authority), and at variance with the only fact which the trial establishes; namely, that the robbery was the crime planned, and the cause, whether accidental or otherwise, of the murder.

metaphysical speculation and analysis, in order to indulge which, Fiction, whether in the drama or the higher class of romance, seeks its materials and grounds its lessons in the chronicles of passion and crime.

The guilt of Eugene Aram is not that of a vulgar ruffian; it leads to views and considerations vitally and wholly distinct from those with which profligate knavery and brutal cruelty revolt and displease us in the literature of Newgate and the hulks. His crime does, in fact, belong to those startling paradoxes which the poetry of all countries, and especially of our own, has always delighted to contemplate and examine. Whenever crime appears the aberration and monstrous product of a great intellect or of a nature ordinarily virtuous, it becomes not only the subject for genius, which deals with passions, to describe, but a problem for philosophy, which deals with actions, to investigate and solve; hence the Macbeths and Richards, the Iagos and Othellos. My regret, therefore, is not that I chose a subject unworthy of elevated fiction, but that such a subject did not occur to some one capable of treating it as it deserves; and I never felt this more strongly than when the late Mr. Godwin (in conversing with me after the publication of this romance) observed that he had always thought the story of Eugene Aram peculiarly adapted for fiction, and that he had more than once entertained the notion of making it the foundation of a novel. I can well conceive what depth and power that gloomy record would have taken from the dark and inquiring genius of the author of "Caleb Williams." In fact, the crime and trial of Eugene Aram arrested the attention and engaged the conjectures of many of the most eminent men of his own time. His guilt or innocence was the matter of strong contest; and so keen and so enduring was the sensation created by an event thus completely distinct from the ordinary annals of human crime that even History

turned aside from the sonorous narrative of the struggles of parties and the feuds of kings to commemorate the learning and the guilt of the humble schoolmaster of Lynn. Did I want any other answer to the animadversions of commonplace criticism, it might be sufficient to say that what the historian relates the novelist has little right to disdain.

Before entering on this romance, I examined with some care the probabilities of Aram's guilt; for I need scarcely perhaps observe that the legal evidence against him is extremely deficient, — furnished almost entirely by one (Houseman) confessedly an accomplice of the crime and a partner in the booty, and that in the present day a man tried upon evidence so scanty and suspicious would unquestionably escape conviction. Nevertheless, I must frankly own that the moral evidence appeared to me more convincing than the legal; and though not without some doubt, which, in common with many, I still entertain of the real facts of the murder,[1] I adopted that view which, at all events, was the best suited to the higher purposes of fiction. On the whole, I still think that if the crime were committed by Aram, the motive was not very far removed from one which led recently to a remarkable murder in Spain. A priest in that country, wholly absorbed in learned pursuits, and apparently of spotless life, confessed that, being debarred by extreme poverty from prosecuting a study which had become the sole passion of his existence, he had reasoned himself into the belief that it would be admissible to rob a very dissolute, worthless man if he applied the money so obtained to the acquisition of a knowledge which he could not otherwise acquire, and which he held to be profitable to mankind. Unfortunately, the dissolute rich man was not willing to be robbed for so excellent a purpose; he was armed and he resisted. A struggle

[1] See Preface to the Present Edition, pp. xvii, xviii.

ensued, and the crime of homicide was added to that of robbery. The robbery was premeditated; the murder was accidental. But he who would accept some similar interpretation of Aram's crime must, to comprehend fully the lessons which belong to so terrible a picture of frenzy and guilt, consider also the physical circumstances and condition of the criminal at the time, — severe illness, intense labor of the brain, poverty bordering upon famine, the mind preternaturally at work devising schemes and excuses to arrive at the means for ends ardently desired. And all this duly considered, the reader may see the crime bodying itself out from the shades and chimeras of a horrible hallucination, — the awful dream of a brief but delirious and convulsed disease. It is thus only that we can account for the contradiction of one deed at war with a whole life, — blasting, indeed, forever the happiness, but making little revolution in the pursuits and disposition of the character. No one who has examined with care and thoughtfulness the aspects of Life and Nature but must allow that in the contemplation of such a spectacle, great and most moral truths must force themselves on the notice and sink deep into the heart. The entanglements of human reasoning; the influence of circumstance upon deeds; the perversion that may be made, by one self-palter with the Fiend, of elements the most glorious; the secret effect of conscience in frustrating all for which the crime was done, leaving genius without hope, knowledge without fruit, deadening benevolence into mechanism, tainting love itself with terror and suspicion, — such reflections (leading, with subtler minds, to many more vast and complicated theorems in the consideration of our nature, social and individual) arise out of the tragic moral which the story of Eugene Aram (were it but adequately treated) could not fail to convey.

BRUSSELS, August, 1840.

PREFACE

TO THE PRESENT EDITION.

If none of my prose works have been so attacked as "Eugene Aram," none have so completely triumphed over attack. It is true that, whether from real or affected ignorance of the true morality of fiction, a few critics may still reiterate the old commonplace charges of "selecting heroes from Newgate," or "investing murderers with interest;" but the firm hold which the work has established in the opinion of the general public, and the favor it has received in every country where English literature is known, suffice to prove that, whatever its faults, it belongs to that legitimate class of fiction which illustrates life and truth, and only deals with crime as the recognized agency of pity and terror in the conduct of tragic narrative. All that I would say further on this score has been said in the general defence of my writings which I put forth two years ago; and I ask the indulgence of the reader if I repeat myself: —

"Here, unlike the milder guilt of Paul Clifford, the author was not to imply reform to society, nor open in this world atonement and pardon to the criminal. As it would have been wholly in vain to disguise, by mean tamperings with art and truth, the ordinary habits of life and attributes of character which all record and remembrance ascribed to Eugene Aram; as it would have defeated every end of the moral inculcated by his guilt, to portray, in the caricature of the murderer of melodrama, a man immersed in study, of whom it was noted that he turned aside from the worm in his path, —

so I have allowed to him whatever contrasts with his inexpiable crime have been recorded on sufficient authority. But I have invariably taken care that the crime itself should stand stripped of every sophistry, and hideous to the perpetrator as well as to the world. Allowing all by which attention to his biography may explain the tremendous paradox of fearful guilt in a man aspiring after knowledge, and not generally inhumane; allowing that the crime came upon him in the partial insanity produced by the combining circumstances of a brain overwrought by intense study, disturbed by an excited imagination and the fumes of a momentary disease of the reasoning faculty, consumed by the desire of knowledge, unwholesome and morbid, because coveted as an end, not a means, added to the other physical causes of mental aberration to be found in loneliness, and want verging upon famine, — all these, which a biographer may suppose to have conspired to his crime, have never been used by the novelist as excuses for its enormity, nor indeed, lest they should *seem* as excuses, have they ever been clearly presented to the view. The moral consisted in showing more than the mere legal punishment at the close. It was to show how the consciousness of the deed was to exclude whatever humanity of character preceded and belied it from all active exercise, all social confidence; how the knowledge of the bar between the minds of others and his own deprived the criminal of all motive to ambition, and blighted knowledge of all fruit. Miserable in his affections, barren in his intellect; clinging to solitude, yet accursed in it; dreading as a danger the fame he had once coveted; obscure in spite of learning, hopeless in spite of love, fruitless and joyless in his life, calamitous and shameful in his end, — surely such is no palliative of crime, no dalliance and toying with the grimness of evil! And surely to any ordinary comprehension and candid mind such is the moral conveyed by the fiction of 'Eugene Aram.'"[1]

In point of composition "Eugene Aram" is, I think, entitled to rank amongst the best of my fictions. It some-

[1] A Word to the Public, 1847.

what humiliates me to acknowledge that neither practice nor study has enabled me to surpass a work written at a very early age, in the skilful construction and patient development of plot; and though I have since sought to call forth higher and more subtle passions, I doubt if I have ever excited the two elementary passions of tragedy, — namely, pity and terror, — to the same degree. In mere style, too, "Eugene Aram," in spite of certain verbal oversights, and defects in youthful taste (some of which I have endeavored to remove from the present edition), appears to me unexcelled by any of my later writings, — at least in what I have always studied as the main essential of style in narrative; namely, its harmony with the subject selected and the passions to be moved, — while it exceeds them all in the minuteness and fidelity of its descriptions of external nature. This indeed it ought to do, since the study of external nature is made a peculiar attribute of the principal character, whose fate colors the narrative. I do not know whether it has been observed that the time occupied by the events of the story is conveyed through the medium of such descriptions. Each description is introduced, not for its own sake, but to serve as a calendar marking the gradual changes of the seasons as they bear on to his doom the guilty worshipper of Nature. And in this conception, and in the care with which it has been followed out, I recognize one of my earliest but most successful attempts at the subtler principles of narrative art.

In this edition I have made one alteration somewhat more important than mere verbal correction. On going, with maturer judgment, over all the evidences on which Aram was condemned, I have convinced myself that though an accomplice in the robbery of Clarke, he was free both from the premeditated design and the actual deed of murder. The crime, indeed, would still rest on his conscience and insure his punishment, as necessarily

incidental to the robbery in which he was an accomplice, with Houseman; but finding my convictions, that in the murder itself he had no share, borne out by the opinion of many eminent lawyers by whom I have heard the subject discussed, I have accordingly so shaped his confession to Walter.

Perhaps it will not be without interest to the reader if I append to this preface an authentic specimen of Eugene Aram's composition, for which I am indebted to the courtesy of a gentleman by whose grandfather it was received, with other papers (especially a remarkable "Outline of a New Lexicon"), during Aram's confinement in York prison. The essay I select is, indeed, not without value in itself as a very curious and learned illustration of Popular Antiquities, and it serves also to show not only the comprehensive nature of Aram's studies and the inquisitive eagerness of his mind, but also the fact that he was completely self-taught; for in contrast to much philological erudition, and to passages that evince considerable mastery in the higher resources of language, we may occasionally notice those lesser inaccuracies from which the writings of men solely self-educated are rarely free, — indeed Aram himself, in sending to a gentleman an elegy on Sir John Armitage, which shows much, but undisciplined, power of versification, says, "I send this elegy, which, indeed, if you had not had the curiosity to desire, I could not have had the assurance to offer, scarce believing I, who was hardly taught to read, have any abilities to write."

THE MELSUPPER AND SHOUTING THE CHURN.

These rural entertainments and usages were formerly more general all over England than they are at present, being become by time, necessity, or avarice, complex, confined, and altered. They are commonly insisted upon by the reapers as customary things, and a part of their due for the toils of the

harvest, and complied with by their masters perhaps more through regards of interest than inclination; for should they refuse them the pleasures of this much-expected time, this festal night, the youth especially, of both sexes would decline serving them for the future, and employ their labors for others, who would promise them the rustic joys of the harvest-supper, mirth and music, dance and song. These feasts appear to be the relics of Pagan ceremonies or of Judaism, it is hard to say which, and carry in them more meaning and are of far higher antiquity than is generally apprehended. It is true the subject is more curious than important, and I believe altogether untouched; and as it seems to be little understood, has been as little adverted to. I do not remember it to have been so much as the subject of a conversation. Let us make, then, a little excursion into this field, for the same reason men sometimes take a walk. Its traces are discoverable at a very great distance of time from ours, — nay, seem as old as a sense of joy for the benefit of plentiful harvests and human gratitude to the eternal Creator for His munificence to men. We hear it under various names in different counties, and often in the same county; as, "melsupper," "churn-supper," "harvest-supper," "harvest-home," "feast of in-gathering," etc. And perhaps this feast had been long observed, and by different tribes of people, before it became preceptive with the Jews. However, let that be as it will, the custom very lucidly appears from the following passages of S. S., Exod. xxiii. 16, "And the feast of harvest, the first-fruits of thy labors, which thou hast sown in the field." And its institution as a sacred rite is commanded in Levit. xxiii. 39: "When ye have gathered in the fruit of the land ye shall keep a feast to the Lord."

The Jews then, as is evident from hence, celebrated the feast of harvest, and that by precept; and though no vestiges of any such feast either are or can be produced before these, yet the oblation of the Primitiæ, of which this feast was a consequence, is met with prior to this, for we find that "Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering to the Lord" (Gen. iv. 3).

Yet this offering of the first-fruits, it may well be supposed,

was not peculiar to the Jews either at the time of, or after, its establishment by their legislator; neither the feast in consequence of it. Many other nations, either in imitation of the Jews, or rather by tradition from their several patriarchs, observed the rite of offering their Primitiæ, and of solemnizing a festival after it, in religious acknowledgment for the blessing of harvest, though that acknowledgment was ignorantly misapplied in being directed to a secondary, not the primary, fountain of this benefit, — namely to Apollo, or the Sun.

For Callimachus affirms that these Primitiæ were sent by the people of every nation to the temple of Apollo in Delos, the most distant that enjoyed the happiness of corn and harvest, even by the Hyperboreans in particular, — Hymn to Apol., Οἱ μέντοι καλάμην τε καὶ ἱερὰ δράγμα πρῶτοι ἀσταχύων, "Bring the sacred sheafs and the mystic offerings."

Herodotus also mentions this annual custom of the Hyperboreans, remarking that those of Delos talk of Ἱερὰ ἐνδεδεμένα ἐν καλάμῃ πυρῶν ἐξ Ὑπερβόρεων, "Holy things tied up in sheaf of wheat conveyed from the Hyperboreans." And the Jews, by the command of their law, offered also a sheaf: "And shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the first-fruits of the harvest unto the priest."

This is not introduced in proof of any feast observed by the people who had harvests, but to show the universality of the custom of offering the Primitiæ, which preceded this feast. But yet it may be looked upon as equivalent to a proof; for as the offering and the feast appear to have been always and intimately connected in countries affording records, so it is more than probable they were connected too in countries which had none, or none that ever survived to our times. An entertainment and gayety were still the concomitants of these rites, which with the vulgar, one may pretty truly suppose, were esteemed the most acceptable and material part of them, and a great reason of their having subsisted through such a length of ages, when both the populace and many of the learned too have lost sight of the object to which they had been originally directed. This, among many other ceremonies

of the heathen worship, became disused in some places and retained in others, but still continued declining after the promulgation of the Gospel. In short, there seems great reason to conclude that this feast, which was once sacred to Apollo, was constantly maintained, when a far less valuable circumstance, — i. e., "shouting the churn," — is observed to this day by the reapers, and from so old an era; for we read of this exclamation, Isa. xvi. 9: "For the shouting for thy summer fruits and for thy harvest is fallen;" and again, ver. 10: "And in the vineyards there shall be no singing, their shouting shall be no shouting." Hence then, or from some of the Phœnician colonies, is our traditionary "shouting the churn." But it seems these Orientals shouted both for joy of their harvest of grapes and of corn. We have no quantity of the first to occasion so much joy as does our plenty of the last; and I do not remember to have heard whether their vintages abroad are attended with this custom. Bread or cakes compose part of the Hebrew offering (Levit. xxiii. 13), and a cake thrown upon the head of the victim was also part of the Greek offering to Apollo (see Hom., Il., α), whose worship was formerly celebrated in Britain, where the May-pole yet continues one remain of it. This they adorned with garlands on May-day, to welcome the approach of Apollo, or the Sun, towards the North, and to signify that those flowers were the product of his presence and influence. But upon the progress of Christianity, as was observed above, Apollo lost his divinity again, and the adoration of his deity subsided by degrees. Yet so permanent is custom that this rite of the harvest-supper, together with that of the May-pole (of which last see Voss. de Orig. and Prag. Idolatr., 1, 2), have been preserved in Britain; and what had been anciently offered to the god, the reapers as prudently ate up themselves.

At last the use of the meal of the new corn was neglected, and the supper, so far as meal was concerned, was made indifferently of old or new corn, as was most agreeable to the founder. And here the usage itself accounts for the name of "Melsupper" (where *mel* signifies meal, or else the instrument called with us a "Mell," wherewith antiquity reduced their

corn to meal in a mortar, which still amounts to the same thing); for provisions of meal, or of corn in furmety, etc., composed by far the greatest part in these elder and country entertainments, perfectly conformable to the simplicity of those times, places, and persons, however meanly they may now be looked upon. And as the harvest was last concluded with several preparations of meal, or brought to be ready for the "mell," this term became, in a translated signification, to mean the last of other things; as, when a horse comes last in the race, they often say in the North, "He has got the mell."

All the other names of this country festivity sufficiently explain themselves, except "Churn-supper;" and this is entirely different from "Melsupper:" but they generally happen so near together that they are frequently confounded. The "Churn-supper" was always provided when all was shorn, but the "Melsupper" after all was got in. And it was called the "Churn-supper" because, from immemorial times, it was customary to produce in a churn a great quantity of cream, and to circulate it by dishfuls to each of the rustic company, to be eaten with bread. And here sometimes very extraordinary execution has been done upon cream. And though this custom has been disused in many places, and agreeably commuted for by ale, yet it survives still, and that about Whitby and Scarborough in the East, and round about Gisburn, etc., in Craven, in the West. But perhaps a century or two more will put an end to it, and both the thing and name shall die. Vicarious ale is now more approved, and the tankard almost everywhere politely preferred to the Churn.

This Churn (in our provincial pronunciation Kern) is the Hebrew Kern, קרן, or Keren, from its being circular, like most horns; and it is the Latin *corona*, — named so either from *radii*, resembling horns, as on some very ancient coins, or from its encircling the head: so a ring of people is called *corona*. Also the Celtic Koren, Keren, or corn, which continues according to its old pronunciation in Cornwall, etc., and our modern word horn is no more than this; the ancient hard sound of *k* in corn being softened into the aspirate *h*, as has been done in numberless instances.

The Irish Celtæ also called a round stone *clogh crene*, where the variation is merely dialectic. Hence, too, our crane-berries, — *i.e.*, round berries, — from this Celtic adjective *crene*, round.

The quotations from Scripture in Aram's original MS. were both in the Hebrew character, and their value in English sounds.

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EUGENE ARAM.

BOOK I.

Τει. Φεῦ, φεῦ· φρονεῖν ὡς δεινὸν ἔνθα μὴ τέλη
λύει φρονοῦντι.

. . . . . .

Οι. Τί δ' ἔστιν; ὡς ἄθυμος εἰσελήλυθας.
Τει. Ἄφες μ' ἐς οἴκους· ῥᾷστα γὰρ τὸ σόν τε σὺ
κἀγὼ διοίσω τοὐμόν, ἢν ἐμοὶ πίθῃ.
—Οἰδ. Τυρ. 316–321.

Tei. Alas! alas! how e d it is to be wise when it is not advantageous to him who is so.

. . . . . .

Oi. But what is the cause that you come hither sad?
Tei. Dismiss me to my house; for both you will bear your fate easier, and I mine, if you take my advice.

CHAPTER I.

THE VILLAGE. — ITS INHABITANTS. — AN OLD MANOR-HOUSE, AND AN ENGLISH FAMILY; THEIR HISTORY, INVOLVING A MYSTERIOUS EVENT.

Protected by the divinity they adored, supported by the earth which they cultivated, and at peace with themselves, they enjoyed the sweets of life without dreading or desiring dissolution. — *Numa Pompilius.*

In the county of —— there is a sequestered hamlet which I have often sought occasion to pass, and which I have never left without a certain reluctance and regret. The place, indeed, is associated with the memory of events that still retain a singular and fearful interest; but the scene needs not the charm of legend to arrest the attention of the traveller. In no part of the world which it has been my lot to visit have I seen

a landscape of more pastoral beauty. The hamlet — to which I shall here give the name of Grassdale — is situated in a valley, which for about the length of a mile winds among gardens and orchards laden with fruit, between two chains of gentle and fertile hills.

Here, singly or in pairs, are scattered cottages, which bespeak a comfort and a rural luxury less often than our poets have described the characteristics of the English peasantry. It has been observed that wherever you see a flower in a cottage garden, or a bird-cage at a cottage casement, you may feel sure that the inmates are better and wiser than their neighbors; and such humble tokens of attention to something beyond the sterile labor of life were (we must now revert to the past) to be remarked in almost every one of the lowly abodes of Grassdale. The jasmine here, — there the rose or honeysuckle, clustered over the lattice and threshold, not so wildly as to testify negligence, but rather to sweeten the air than exclude the light. Each of the cottages possessed at its rear its plot of ground apportioned to the more useful and nutritious products of Nature; while the greater part of them fenced also from the unfrequented road a little spot for a lupin, the sweet-pea, the wall-flower, or the stock. And it is not unworthy of remark that the bees came in greater clusters to Grassdale than to any other part of that rich and cultivated district. A small piece of waste land, which was intersected by a brook fringed with osier and dwarf and fantastic pollards, afforded pasture for a few cows and the only carrier's solitary horse. The stream itself was of no ignoble repute among the gentle craft of the Angle, — the brotherhood whom our associations defend in spite of our mercy; and this repute drew welcome and periodical itinerants to the village, who furnished it with its scanty news of the great world without, and maintained in a decorous custom the little and single hostelry of the place. Not that Peter Dealtry, the proprietor of The Spotted Dog, was altogether contented to subsist upon the gains of his hospitable profession, — he joined thereto the light cares of a small farm, held under a wealthy and an easy landlord; and being moreover honored with the dignity of clerk to the parish, he was deemed by his neighbors

a person of no small accomplishments and no insignificant distinction. He was a little, dry, thin man, of a turn rather sentimental than jocose. A memory well-stored with fag-ends of psalms and hymns (which, being less familiar than the psalms to the ears of the villagers, were more than suspected to be his own composition) often gave a poetic and semi-religious coloring to his conversation, which accorded rather with his dignity in the church than his post at The Spotted Dog. Yet he disliked not his joke, though it was subtle and delicate of nature; nor did he disdain to bear companionship over his own liquor with guests less gifted and refined.

In the centre of the village you chanced upon a cottage which had been lately whitewashed, where a certain preciseness in the owner might be detected in the clipped hedge and the exact and newly mended stile by which you approached the habitation. Herein dwelt the beau and bachelor of the village, — somewhat antiquated, it is true, but still an object of great attention and some hope to the elder damsels in the vicinity, and of a respectful popularity (that did not, however, prohibit a joke) among the younger. Jacob Bunting — so was this gentleman called — had been for many years in the king's service, in which he had risen to the rank of corporal, and had saved and pinched together a certain small independence, upon which he now rented his cottage and enjoyed his leisure. He had seen a good deal of the world, and profited in shrewdness by his experience; he had rubbed off, however, all superfluous devotion as he rubbed off his prejudices; and though he drank more often than any one else with the landlord of The Spotted Dog, there was not a wit in the place who showed so little indulgence to the publican's segments of psalmody. Jacob was a tall, comely, and perpendicular personage; his threadbare coat was scrupulously brushed, and his hair punctiliously plastered at the sides into two stiff, obstinate-looking curls, and at the top into what he was pleased to call a feather, though it was much more like a tile. His conversation had in it something peculiar; generally it assumed a quick, short, abrupt turn, that, retrenching all superfluities of pronoun and conjunction, and marching at once upon the meaning of the sentence,

had in it a military and Spartan significance which betrayed how difficult it often is for a man to forget that he has been a corporal. Occasionally, indeed, — for where but in farces is the phraseology of the humorist always the same? — he escaped into a more enlarged and Christianlike method of dealing with the king's English; but that was chiefly noticeable when from conversation he launched himself into lecture, — a luxury the worthy soldier loved greatly to indulge: for much had he seen, and somewhat had he reflected; and valuing himself — which was odd in a corporal — more on his knowledge of the world than his knowledge of war, he rarely missed any occasion of edifying a patient listener with the result of his observations.

After you have sauntered by the veteran's door, beside which you generally, if the evening were fine, or he was not drinking with neighbor Dealtry, or taking his tea with gossip this or master that, or teaching some emulous urchins the broadsword exercise, or snaring trout in the stream, or, in short, otherwise engaged, — beside which, I say, you not unfrequently beheld him sitting on a rude bench, and enjoying with half-shut eyes, crossed legs, but still unindulgently erect posture, the luxury of his pipe, — you ventured over a little wooden bridge, beneath which, clear and shallow, ran the rivulet we have before honorably mentioned, and a walk of a few minutes brought you to a moderately-sized and old-fashioned mansion, the manor-house of the parish. It stood at the very foot of a hill; behind, a rich, ancient, and hanging wood brought into relief the exceeding freshness and verdure of the patch of green meadow immediately in front. On one side, the garden was bounded by the village church-yard, with its simple mounds and its few scattered and humble tombs. The church was of great antiquity; and it was only in one point of view that you caught more than a glimpse of its gray tower and graceful spire, so thickly and so darkly grouped the yew-tree and the pine around the edifice. Opposite the gate by which you gained the house, the view was not extended, but rich with wood and pasture, backed by a hill which, less verdant than its fellows, was covered with sheep; while you saw hard by, the

rivulet darkening and stealing away till your sight, though not your ear, lost it among the woodland.

Trained up the embrowned paling on either side of the gate were bushes of rustic fruit; and fruit and flowers (through plots of which green and winding alleys had been cut with no untasteful hand) testified, by their thriving and healthful looks, the care bestowed upon them. The main boasts of the garden were, on one side a huge horse-chestnut-tree, — the largest in the village, — and on the other an arbor covered with honeysuckles and tapestried within by moss. The house, a gray and quaint building of the time of James I., with stone copings and gable roof, could scarcely in these days have been deemed a fitting residence for the lord of the manor. Nearly the whole of the centre was occupied by the hall, in which the meals of the family were commonly held; only two other sitting-rooms, of very moderate dimensions, had been reserved by the architect for the convenience or ostentation of the proprietor. An ample porch jutted from the main building, and this was covered with ivy, as the sides of the windows were with jasmine and honeysuckle; while seats were ranged inside the porch carved with many a rude initial and long past date.

The owner of this mansion bore the name of Rowland Lester. His forefathers, without pretending to high antiquity of family, had held the dignity of squires of Grassdale for some two centuries; and Rowland Lester was perhaps the first of the race who had stirred above fifty miles from the house in which each successive lord had received his birth, or the green church-yard in which was yet chronicled his death. The present proprietor was a man of cultivated tastes; and abilities, naturally not much above mediocrity, had been improved by travel as well as study. Himself and one younger brother had been early left masters of their fate and their several portions. The younger, Geoffrey, testified a roving and dissipated turn. Bold, licentious, extravagant, unprincipled, his career soon outstripped the slender fortunes of a cadet in the family of a country squire. He was early thrown into difficulties, but by some means or other they never seemed to overwhelm him; an unexpected turn, a lucky adventure, presented

itself at the very moment when Fortune appeared the most utterly to have deserted him.

Among these more propitious fluctuations in the tide of affairs was, at about the age of forty, a sudden marriage with a young lady of what might be termed (for Geoffrey Lester's rank of life, and the rational expenses of that day) a very competent and respectable fortune. Unhappily, however, the lady was neither handsome in feature nor gentle in temper; and after a few years of quarrel and contest, the faithless husband, one bright morning, having collected in his proper person whatever remained of their fortune, absconded from the conjugal hearth without either warning or farewell. He left nothing to his wife but his house, his debts, and his only child, a son. From that time to the present little had been known, though much had been conjectured, concerning the deserter. For the first few years they traced, however, so far of his fate as to learn that he had been seen once in India; and that previously he had been met in England by a relation, under the disguise of assumed names, — a proof that whatever his occupations, they could scarcely be very respectable. But of late nothing whatsoever relating to the wanderer had transpired. By some he was imagined dead; by most he was forgotten. Those more immediately connected with him — his brother in especial — cherished a secret belief that wherever Geoffrey Lester should chance to alight, the manner of alighting would (to use the significant and homely metaphor) be always on his legs; and coupling the wonted luck of the scapegrace with the fact of his having been seen in India, Rowland in his heart not only hoped, but fully expected, that the lost one would, some day or other, return home laden with the spoils of the East, and eager to shower upon his relatives, in recompense of long desertion, —

> "With richest hand . . . barbaric pearl and gold."

But we must return to the forsaken spouse. Left in this abrupt destitution and distress, Mrs. Lester had only the resource of applying to her brother-in-law, whom indeed the fugitive had before seized many opportunities of not leaving

wholly unprepared for such an application. Rowland promptly and generously obeyed the summons: he took the child and the wife to his own home; he freed the latter from the persecutions of all legal claimants; and after selling such effects as remained, he devoted the whole proceeds to the forsaken family, without regarding his own expenses on their behalf, ill as he was able to afford the luxury of that self-neglect. The wife did not long need the asylum of his hearth, — she, poor lady, died of a slow fever, produced by irritation and disappointment, a few months after Geoffrey's desertion. She had no need to recommend her child to his kind-hearted uncle's care. And now we must glance over the elder brother's domestic fortunes.

In Rowland, the wild dispositions of his brother were so far tamed that they assumed only the character of a buoyant temper and a gay spirit. He had strong principles as well as warm feelings, and a fine and resolute sense of honor utterly impervious to attack. It was impossible to be in his company an hour and not see that he was a man to be respected. It was equally impossible to live with him a week and not see that he was a man to be beloved. He also had married, and about a year after that era in the life of his brother, but not for the same advantage of fortune. He had formed an attachment to the portionless daughter of a man in his own neighborhood and of his own rank. He wooed and won her, and for a few years he enjoyed that greatest happiness which the world is capable of bestowing, — the society and the love of one in whom we could wish for no change, and beyond whom we have no desire. But what Evil cannot corrupt, Fate seldom spares. A few months after the birth of a second daughter, the young wife of Rowland Lester died. It was to a widowed hearth that the wife and child of his brother came for shelter. Rowland was a man of an affectionate and warm heart: if the blow did not crush, at least it changed him. Naturally of a cheerful and ardent disposition, his mood now became more sober and sedate. He shrank from the rural gayeties and companionship he had before courted and enlivened, and for the first time in his life the mourner felt the holiness of soli-

tude. As his nephew and his motherless daughters grew up, they gave an object to his seclusion and a relief to his reflections. He found a pure and unfailing delight in watching the growth of their young minds and guiding their differing dispositions; and as time at length enabled them to return his affection and appreciate his cares, he became once more sensible that he had a HOME.

The elder of his daughters, Madeline, at the time our story opens, had attained the age of eighteen. She was the beauty and the boast of the whole country. Above the ordinary height, her figure was richly and exquisitely formed. So translucently pure and soft was her complexion that it might have seemed the token of delicate health, but for the dewy redness of her lips and the freshness of teeth whiter than pearls. Her eyes, of a deep blue, wore a thoughtful and serene expression; and her forehead, higher and broader than it usually is in women, gave promise of a certain nobleness of intellect, and added dignity — but a feminine dignity — to the more tender characteristics of her beauty. And, indeed, the peculiar tone of Madeline's mind fulfilled the indication of her features, and was eminently thoughtful and high-wrought. She had early testified a remarkable love for study, and not only a desire for knowledge, but a veneration for those who possessed it. The remote corner of the county in which they lived, and the rarely broken seclusion which Lester habitually preserved from the intercourse of their few and scattered neighbors, had naturally cast each member of the little circle upon his or her own resources. An accident, some five years ago, had confined Madeline for several weeks, or rather months, to the house; and as the old Hall possessed a very respectable share of books, she had then matured and confirmed that love for reading and reflection which she had at a yet earlier period prematurely evinced. The woman's tendency to romance naturally tinctured her meditations, and thus, while they dignified, they also softened her mind. Her sister Ellinor, younger by two years, was of a character equally gentle, but less elevated. She looked up to her sister as a superior being. She felt pride, without a shadow of envy, for Madeline's su-

perior and surpassing beauty, and was unconsciously guided in her pursuits and predilections by a mind which she cheerfully acknowledged to be loftier than her own. And yet Ellinor had also her pretensions to personal loveliness, and pretensions perhaps that would be less reluctantly acknowledged by her own sex than those of her sister. The sunlight of a happy and innocent heart sparkled on her face, and gave a beam it gladdened you to behold to her quick hazel eye, and a smile that broke out from a thousand dimples. She did not possess the height of Madeline; and though not so slender as to be curtailed of the roundness and feminine luxuriance of beauty, her shape was slighter, feebler, and less rich in its symmetry than her sister's. And this the tendency of the physical frame to require elsewhere support, nor to feel secure of strength, perhaps influenced her mind, and made love, and the dependence of love, more necessary to her than to the thoughtful and lofty Madeline. The latter might pass through life, and never see the one to whom her heart could give itself away; but every village might possess a hero whom the imagination of Ellinor could clothe with unreal graces, and towards whom the lovingness of her disposition might bias her affections. Both, however, eminently possessed that earnestness and purity of heart which would have made them, perhaps in an equal degree, constant and devoted to the object of an attachment once formed, in defiance of change, and to the brink of death.

Their cousin Walter, Geoffrey Lester's son, was now in his twenty-first year, — tall and strong of person, and with a face, if not regularly handsome, striking enough to be generally deemed so. High-spirited, bold, fiery, impatient; jealous of the affections of those he loved; cheerful to outward seeming, but restless, fond of change, and subject to the melancholy and pining mood common to young and ardent minds: such was the character of Walter Lester. The estates of Lester were settled in the male line, and devolved therefore upon him. Yet there were moments when he keenly felt his orphan and deserted situation, and sighed to think that while his father perhaps yet lived, he was a dependant for affection, if

not for maintenance, on the kindness of others. This reflection sometimes gave an air of sullenness or petulance to his character that did not really belong to it. For what in the world makes a man of just pride appear so unamiable as the sense of dependence?

CHAPTER II.

A PUBLICAN, A SINNER, AND A STRANGER.

Ah, Don Alphonso, is it you? Agreeable accident! Chance presents you to my eyes where you were least expected. — *Gil Blas.*

It was an evening in the beginning of summer, and Peter Dealtry and the *ci-devant* corporal sat beneath the sign of The Spotted Dog (as it hung motionless from the bough of a friendly elm), quaffing a cup of boon companionship. The reader will imagine the two men very different from each other in form and aspect: the one short, dry, fragile, and betraying a love of ease in his unbuttoned vest, and a certain lolling, see-sawing method of balancing his body upon his chair; the other erect and solemn, and as steady on his seat as if he were nailed to it. It was a fine, tranquil, balmy evening; the sun had just set, and the clouds still retained the rosy tints which they had caught from its parting ray. Here and there, at scattered intervals, you might see the cottages peeping from the trees around them, or mark the smoke that rose from their roofs, — roofs green with mosses and house-leek, — in graceful and spiral curls against the clear soft air. It was an English scene; and the two men, the dog at their feet (for Peter Dealtry favored a wiry, stone-colored cur, which he called a terrier), and just at the door of the little inn two old gossips loitering on the threshold in familiar chat with the landlady in cap and kerchief, — all together made a group equally English, and somewhat picturesque, though homely enough in effect.

"Well, now," said Peter Dealtry, as he pushed the brown jug towards the corporal, "this is what I call pleasant; it puts me in mind —"

"Of what?" quoth the corporal.

"Of those nice lines in the hymn, Master Bunting: —

"'How fair ye are, ye little hills,
Ye little fields also,
Ye murmuring streams that sweetly run,
Ye willows in a row!'

There is something very comfortable in sacred verses, Master Bunting. But you 're a scoffer."

"Pshaw, man!" said the corporal, throwing out his right leg and leaning back, with his eyes half shut, and his chin protruded, as he took an unusually long inhalation from his pipe. "Pshaw, man! send verses to the right-about, — fit for girls going to school of a Sunday; full-grown men more up to snuff. I 've seen the world, Master Dealtry, — the world, and be d — d to you! — augh!"

"Fie, neighbor, fie! What 's the good of profaneness, evil speaking, and slandering? —

"'Oaths are the debts your spendthrift soul must pay;
All scores are chalked against the reckoning day.'

Just wait a bit, neighbor, — wait till I light my pipe."

"Tell you what," said the corporal, after he had communicated from his own pipe the friendly flame to his comrade's, "tell you what, — talk nonsense; the Commander-in-chief 's no martinet: if we 're all right in action, he 'll wink at a slip word or two. Come, no humbug; hold jaw. D' ye think God would sooner have a snivelling fellow like you in his regiment than a man like me, clean-limbed, straight as a dart, six feet one without his shoes? — baugh!"

This notion of the corporal, by which he would have likened the dominion of heaven to the King of Prussia's body-guard, and only admitted the elect on account of their inches, so tickled mine host's fancy that he leaned back in his chair and indulged in a long, dry, obstreperous cachinnation. This

irreverence mightily displeased the corporal. He looked at the little man very sourly, and said, in his least smooth accentuation, —

"What — devil — cackling at? Always grin, grin, grin — giggle, giggle, giggle — pshaw!"

"Why really, neighbor," said Peter, composing himself, "you must let a man laugh now and then."

"Man!" said the corporal, — "*man's* a noble animal! Man's a musket primed, loaded, ready to save a friend or kill a foe, — charge not to be wasted on every tom-tit. But you, — not a musket, but a cracker! Noisy, harmless, can't touch you but off you go, — whiz, pop, bang in one's face! — baugh!"

"Well!" said the good-humored landlord, "I should think Master Aram, the great scholar who lives down the vale yonder, a man quite after your own heart. He is grave enough to suit you. He does not laugh very easily, I fancy."

"After *my* heart? Stoops like a bow!"

"Indeed he does look on the ground as he walks, — when I think, I do the same. But what a marvellous man it is! I hear that he reads the Psalms in Hebrew. He's very affable and meek-like for such a scholard."

"Tell you what. Seen the world, Master Dealtry, and know a thing or two. Your shy dog is always a deep one. Give me a man who looks me in the face as he would a cannon!"

"Or a lass," said Peter, knowingly.

The grim corporal smiled.

"Talking of lasses," said the soldier, re-filling his pipe, "what creature Miss Lester is! Such eyes! such nose! Fit for a colonel, by Gad! ay, or a major-general!"

"For my part, I think Miss Ellinor almost as handsome, — not so grand-like, but more lovesome."

"Nice little thing!" said the corporal, condescendingly. "But zooks! whom have we here?"

This last question was applied to a man who was slowly turning from the road towards the inn. The stranger, for such he was, was stout, thick-set, and of middle height. His dress was not without pretension to a rank higher than the lowest; but it was threadbare and worn, and soiled with dust

"A PUBLICAN, A SINNER, AND A STRANGER."

and travel. His appearance was by no means prepossessing; small, sunken eyes of a light hazel, and a restless and rather fierce expression, a thick flat nose, high cheek-bones, a large bony jaw from which the flesh receded, and a bull-throat indicative of great strength, constituted his claims to personal attraction. The stately corporal, without moving, kept a vigilant and suspicious eye upon the new-comer, muttering to Peter: "Customer for you, — rum customer too, by Gad!"

The stranger now reached the little table, and halting short, took up the brown jug, without ceremony or preface, and emptied it at a draught.

The corporal stared, the corporal frowned; but before — for he was somewhat slow of speech — he had time to vent his displeasure, the stranger, wiping his mouth with his sleeve, said, in rather a civil and apologetic tone, —

"I beg pardon, gentlemen. I have had a long march of it, and very tired I am."

"Humph! march?" said the corporal, a little appeased: "not in his Majesty's service, eh?"

"Not now," answered the traveller; then, turning round to Dealtry, he said: "Are you landlord here?"

"At your service," said Peter, with the indifference of a man well-to-do, and not ambitious of halfpence.

"Come, then, quick, budge!" said the traveller, tapping him on the back. "Bring more glasses, another jug of the October, and anything or everything your larder is able to produce, — d' ye hear?"

Peter, by no means pleased with the briskness of this address, eyed the dusty and way-worn pedestrian from head to foot; then, looking over his shoulder towards the door, he said, as he ensconced himself yet more firmly on his seat, —

"There 's my wife by the door, friend; go, tell her what you want."

"Do you know," said the traveller, in a slow and measured accent, "do you know, Master Shrivel-face, that I have more than half a mind to break your head for impertinence? You a landlord! You keep an inn, indeed! Come, sir, make off, or — "

"Corporal, corporal!" cried Peter, retreating hastily from his seat as the brawny traveller approached menacingly towards him, "you won't see the peace broken. Have a care, friend, have a care. I'm clerk to the parish, — clerk to the parish, sir; and I'll indict you for sacrilege."

The wooden features of Bunting relaxed into a sort of grin at the alarm of his friend. He puffed away, without making any reply; meanwhile the traveller, taking advantage of Peter's hasty abandonment of his cathedrarian accommodation, seized the vacant chair, and drawing it yet closer to the table, flung himself upon it, and placing his hat on the table, wiped his brows with the air of a man about to make himself thoroughly at home.

Peter Dealtry was assuredly a personage of peaceable disposition; but then he had the proper pride of a host and a clerk. His feelings were exceedingly wounded at this cavalier treatment: before the very eyes of his wife too! What an example! He thrust his hands deep into his breeches' pockets, and strutting with a ferocious swagger towards the traveller, he said, —

"Hark ye, sirrah! this is not the way folks are treated in this country; and I'd have you to know that I'm a man what has a brother a constable."

"Well, sir!"

"Well, sir, indeed! Well! Sir, it's not well, by no manner of means; and if you don't pay for the ale you drank, and go quietly about your business, I'll have you put in the stocks for a vagrant."

This, the most menacing speech Peter Dealtry was ever known to deliver, was uttered with so much spirit that the corporal, who had hitherto preserved silence, — for he was too strict a disciplinarian to thrust himself unnecessarily into brawls, — turned approvingly round, and nodding as well as his stock would suffer him at the indignant Peter, he said, "Well done! 'Fegs — you've a soul, man! — a soul fit for the Forty-second — augh! A soul above the inches of five feet two!"

There was something bitter and sneering in the traveller's aspect as he now, regarding Dealtry, repeated, —

"Vagrant! humph! And pray what is a vagrant?"

"What is a vagrant?" echoed Peter, a little puzzled.

"Yes! answer me that."

"Why, a vagrant is a man what wanders, and what has no money."

"Truly," said the stranger, smiling, — but the smile by no means improved his physiognomy, — "an excellent definition; but one which, I will convince you, does not apply to me." So saying, he drew from his pocket a handful of silver coins, and throwing them on the table, added: "Come, let's have no more of this. You see I can pay for what I order; and now, do recollect that I am a weary and hungry man."

No sooner did Peter behold the money than a sudden placidity stole over his ruffled spirit, nay, —a certain benevolent commiseration for the fatigue and wants of the traveller replaced at once, and as by a spell, the angry feelings that had previously roused him.

"Weary and hungry," said he, — "why did not you say that before? That would have been quite enough for Peter Dealtry. Thank Heaven! I am a man what can feel for my neighbors. I have bowels, — yes, I have bowels. Weary and hungry! — you shall be served in an instant. I may be a little hasty or so, but I'm a good Christian at bottom, — ask the corporal. And what says the Psalmist, Psalm 147? —

> "'By Him the beasts that loosely range
> With timely food are fed;
> He speaks the word, and what He wills
> Is done as soon as said.'"

Animating his kindly emotions by this apt quotation, Peter turned to the house. The corporal now broke silence; the sight of the money had not been without an effect upon him as well as the landlord.

"Warm day, sir. Your health! Oh! forgot you emptied jug — baugh! You said you were not *now* in his Majesty's service: beg pardon, — were you ever?"

"Why, once I was, — many years ago."

"Ah! and what regiment? I was in the Forty-second.

Heard of the Forty-second? Colonel's name Dysart; captain's, Trotter; corporal's, Bunting, — at your service."

"I am much obliged by your confidence," said the traveller, dryly. "I dare say you have seen much service."

"Service! Ah! may well say that, — twenty-three years' hard work; and not the better for it! A man that loves his country is 'titled to a pension, — that's my mind! But the world don't smile upon corporals — augh!"

Here Peter reappeared with a fresh supply of the October, and an assurance that the cold meat would speedily follow.

"I hope yourself and this gentleman will bear me company," said the traveller, passing the jug to the corporal; and in a few moments, so well pleased grew the trio with each other that the sound of their laughter came loud and frequent to the ears of the good housewife within.

The traveller now seemed to the corporal and mine host a right jolly, good-humored fellow. Not, however, that he bore a fair share in the conversation; he rather promoted the hilarity of his new acquaintances than led it. He laughed heartily at Peter's jests and the corporal's repartees; and the latter, by degrees assuming the usual sway he bore in the circles of the village, contrived, before the viands were on the table, to monopolize the whole conversation.

The traveller found in the repast a new excuse for silence. He ate with a most prodigious and most contagious appetite; and in a few seconds the knife and fork of the corporal were as busily engaged as if he had had only three minutes to spare between a march and a dinner.

"This is a pretty retired spot," quoth the traveller, as at length he finished his repast and threw himself back on his chair, — "a very pretty spot. Whose neat old-fashioned house was that I passed on the green, with the gable-ends and the flower-pots in front?"

"Oh, the squire's," answered Peter. "Squire Lester's an excellent gentleman."

"A rich man, I should think, for these parts, — the best house I have seen for some miles," said the stranger, carelessly.

"Rich? Yes, he 's well to do; he does not live so as not to have money to lay by."

"Any family?"

"Two daughters and a nephew."

"And the nephew does not ruin him? Happy uncle! Mine was not so lucky!" said the traveller.

"Sad fellows we soldiers in our young days!" observed the corporal, with a wink. "No, Squire Walter 's a good young man, a pride to his uncle!"

"So," said the pedestrian, "they are not forced to keep up a large establishment and ruin themselves by a retinue of servants? Corporal, the jug."

"Nay," said Peter, "Squire Lester's gate is always open to the poor; but as for show, he leaves that to my lord at the castle."

"The castle! Where 's that?"

"About six miles off, — you 've heard of my Lord ——, I 'll swear."

"Ay, to be sure, — a courtier. But who else lives about here, — I mean, who are the principal persons, barring the corporal and yourself? — Mr. Eelpry, I think our friend here calls you."

"Dealtry, Peter Dealtry, sir, is my name. Why, the most noticeable man, you must know, is a great scholard, a wonderfully learned man, — there, yonder, you may just catch a glimpse of the tall what-d'ye-call-it he has built out on the top of his house, that he may get nearer to the stars. He has got glasses by which I 've heard that you may see the people in the moon walking on their heads; but I can't say as I believe all I hear."

"You are too sensible for that, I 'm sure. But this scholar, I suppose, is not very rich: learning does not clothe men nowadays, eh, corporal?"

"And why should it? Zounds! can it teach a man how to defend his country? Old England wants soldiers, and be d—d to them! But the man 's well enough, I must own, — civil, modest — "

"And not by no means a beggar," added Peter; "he gave as much to the poor last winter as the squire himself."

"Indeed," said the stranger; "this scholar is rich, then?"

"So, so; neither one nor t' other. But if he were as rich as my lord he could not be more respected; the greatest folks in the country come in their carriages and four to see him. Lord bless you! there is not a name more talked on in the whole county than Eugene Aram."

"What!" cried the traveller, his countenance changing as he sprang from his seat. "What! — Aram! — did you say Aram? Great God! how strange!"

Peter, not a little startled by the abruptness and vehemence of his guest, stared at him with open mouth, and even the corporal involuntarily took his pipe from his lips.

"What!" said the former: "you know him, do you? You've heard of him, eh?"

The stranger did not reply. He seemed lost in a revery; he muttered inaudible words between his teeth; now he strode two steps forward, clenching his hands; now smiled grimly; and then, returning to his seat, threw himself on it, still in silence. The soldier and the clerk exchanged looks, and now outspake the corporal, —

"Rum tantrums! What the devil! did the man eat your grandmother?"

Roused, perhaps, by so pertinent and sensible a question, the stranger lifted his head from his breast and said, with a forced smile, "You have done me, without knowing it, a great kindness, my friend. Eugene Aram was an early and intimate acquaintance of mine; we have not met for many years. I never guessed that he lived in these parts, — indeed I did not know where he resided. I am truly glad to think I have lighted upon him thus unexpectedly."

"What! you did not know where he lived? Well, I thought all the world knew that! Why, men from the univarsities have come all the way merely to look at the spot."

"Very likely," returned the stranger; "but I am not a learned man myself, and what is celebrity in one set is obscurity in another. Besides, I have never been in this part of the world before."

Peter was about to reply, when he heard the shrill voice of his wife behind.

"Why don't you rise, Mr. Lazyboots? Where are your eyes? Don't you see the young ladies?"

Dealtry's hat was off in an instant; the stiff corporal rose like a musket. The stranger would have kept his seat, but Dealtry gave him an admonitory tug by the collar; accordingly he rose, muttering a hasty oath, which certainly died on his lips when he saw the cause which had thus constrained him into courtesy.

Through a little gate close by Peter's house Madeline and her sister had just passed on their evening walk; and with the kind familiarity for which they were both noted, they had stopped to salute the landlady of The Spotted Dog as she now, her labors done, sat by the threshold, within hearing of the convivial group, and plaiting straw. The whole family of Lester were so beloved that we question whether my lord himself, as the great nobleman of the place was always called (as if there were only one lord in the peerage), would have obtained the same degree of respect that was always lavished upon them.

"Don't let us disturb you, good people," said Ellinor, as they now moved towards the boon companions; when, her eye suddenly falling on the stranger, she stopped short. There was something in his appearance, and especially in the expression of his countenance at that moment, which no one could have marked for the first time without apprehension and distrust; and it was so seldom that, in that retired spot, the young ladies encountered even one unfamiliar face that the effect the stranger's appearance might have produced on any one, might well be increased for them to a startling and painful degree. The traveller saw at once the sensation he had created; his brow lowered; and the same unpleasant smile, or rather sneer, that we have noted before, distorted his lip, as with affected humility he made his obeisance.

"How, a stranger!" said Madeline, sharing, though in a less degree, the feelings of her sister; and then, after a pause, she said, as she glanced over his garb, "not in distress, I hope?"

"No, madam!" said the stranger, — "if by distress is meant beggary. I am in *all* respects, perhaps, better than I seem."

There was a general titter from the corporal, my host, and his wife at the traveller's semi-jest at his own unprepossessing appearance; but Madeline, a little disconcerted, bowed hastily and drew her sister away.

"A proud quean!" said the stranger as he reseated himself and watched the sisters gliding across the green.

All mouths were opened against him immediately. He found it no easy matter to make his peace; and before he had quite done it, he called for his bill and rose to depart.

"Well!" said he, as he tendered his hand to the corporal, "we may meet again, and enjoy together some more of your good stories. Meanwhile, which is my way to this — this — famous scholar's? — ehem!"

"Why," quoth Peter, "you saw the direction in which the young ladies went: you must take the same. Cross the stile you will find at the right, wind along the foot of the hill for about three parts of a mile, and you will then see, in the middle of a broad plain, a lonely gray house with a thingumbob at the top, — a 'servatory they call it; that's Master Aram's."

"Thank you."

"And a very pretty walk it is too," said the dame; "the prettiest hereabouts to my liking, — till you get to the house, at least. And so the young ladies think, for it's their usual walk every evening."

"Humph! Then I may meet them."

"Well, and if you do, make yourself look as Christian-like as you can," retorted the hostess.

There was a second grin at the ill-favored traveller's expense, amidst which he went his way.

"An odd chap," said Peter, looking after the sturdy form of the traveller. "I wonder what he is? He seems well edicated, — makes use of good words."

"What sinnifies," said the corporal, who felt a sort of fellow-feeling for his new acquaintance's bluffness of manner; "what sinnifies what he is? Served his country, — that's enough. Never told me, by the by, his regiment; set me a

talking, and let out nothing himself, — old soldier every inch of him!"

"He can take care of number one," said Peter. "How he emptied the jug! And, my stars, what an appetite!"

"Tush!" said the corporal; "hold jaw. Man of the world, man of the world, that's clear."

CHAPTER III.

A DIALOGUE AND AN ALARM. — A STUDENT'S HOUSE.

A FELLOW by the hand of Nature marked,
Quoted, and signed, to do a deed of shame.
SHAKSPEARE: *King John.*

He is a scholar, if a man may trust
The liberal voice of Fame in her report.
. . . . . .
Myself was once a student, and indeed
Fed with the self-same humor he is now.
BEN JONSON: *Every Man in his Humor.*

THE two sisters pursued their walk along a scene which might well be favored by their selection. No sooner had they crossed the stile than the village seemed vanished into earth, so quiet, so lonely, so far from the evidence of life was the landscape through which they passed. On their right sloped a green and silent hill, shutting out all view beyond itself, save the deepening and twilight sky; to the left, and immediately along their road, lay fragments of stone covered with moss, or shadowed by wild shrubs that here and there gathered into copses, or breaking abruptly away from the rich sod, left frequent spaces through which you caught long vistas of forest-land, or the brooklet gliding in a noisy and rocky course and breaking into a thousand tiny waterfalls or mimic eddies. So secluded was the scene, and so unwitnessing of cultivation, that you would not have believed that a human habitation

could be at hand; and this air of perfect solitude and quiet gave an additional charm to the spot.

"But I assure you," said Ellinor, earnestly continuing a conversation they had begun, "I assure you I was not mistaken: I saw it as plainly as I see you."

"What, in the breast-pocket?"

"Yes; as he drew out his handkerchief I saw the barrel of the pistol quite distinctly."

"Indeed! I think we had better tell my father as soon as we get home, — it may be as well to be on our guard; though robbery, I believe, has not been heard of in Grassdale for these twenty years."

"Yet for what purpose, save that of evil, could he in these peaceable times and this peaceable country carry firearms about him? And what a countenance! Did you note the shy and yet ferocious eye, like that of some animal that longs yet fears to spring upon you?"

"Upon my word, Ellinor," said Madeline, smiling, "you are not very merciful to strangers. After all, the man might have provided himself with the pistol which you saw as a natural precaution. Reflect that, as a stranger, he may well not know how safe this district usually is, and he may have come from London, in the neighborhood of which, they say, robberies have been frequent of late. As to his looks, they are, I own, unpardonable; for so much ugliness there can be no excuse. Had the man been as handsome as our cousin Walter, you would not, perhaps, have been so uncharitable in your fears at the pistol."

"Nonsense, Madeline," said Ellinor, blushing and turning away her face: there was a moment's pause, which the younger sister broke.

"We do not seem," said she, "to make much progress in the friendship of our singular neighbor. I never knew my father court any one so much as he has courted Mr. Aram; and yet you see how seldom he calls upon us, — nay, I often think that he seeks to shun us. No great compliment to our attractions, Madeline!"

"I regret his want of sociability for his own sake," said

Madeline, "for he seems melancholy as well as thoughtful; and he leads so secluded a life that I cannot but think my father's conversation and society, if he would but encourage it, might afford some relief to his solitude."

"And he always seems," observed Ellinor, "to take pleasure in my father's conversation, — as who would not? How his countenance lights up when he converses! It is a pleasure to watch it. I think him positively handsome when he speaks."

"Oh, more than handsome!" said Madeline, with enthusiasm, — "with that high pale brow, and those deep, unfathomable eyes."

Ellinor smiled, and it was now Madeline's turn to blush.

"Well," said the former, "there is something about him that fills one with an indescribable interest; and his manner, if cold at times, is yet always so gentle."

"And to hear him converse," said Madeline, "it is like music. His thoughts, his very words, seem so different from the language and ideas of others. What a pity that he should ever be silent!"

"There is one peculiarity about his gloom, — it never inspires one with distrust," said Ellinor; "if I had observed him in the same circumstances as that ill-omened traveller, I should have had no apprehension."

"Ah! that traveller still runs in your head. If we were to meet him on this spot!"

"Heaven forbid!" cried Ellinor, turning hastily round in alarm; and lo! as if her sister had been a prophet, she saw the very person in question, at some little distance behind them, and walking on with rapid strides.

She uttered a faint shriek of surprise and terror, and Madeline, looking back at the sound, immediately participated in her alarm. The spot looked so desolate and lonely, and the imagination of both had been already so worked upon by Ellinor's fears and their conjectures respecting the ill-boding weapon she had witnessed, that a thousand apprehensions of outrage and murder crowded at once upon the minds of the two sisters. Without, however, giving vent in words to their alarm, they quickened their pace involuntarily, every moment

stealing a glance behind, to watch the progress of the suspected robber. They thought that he also seemed to accelerate his movements; and this observation increased their terror, and would appear, indeed, to give it some more rational ground. At length, as by a sudden turn of the road, they lost sight of the dreaded stranger, their alarm suggested to them but one resolution, and they fairly fled on as fast as the fear which actuated them would allow. The nearest, and indeed the only, house in that direction was Aram's; but they both imagined if they could come within sight of that, they should be safe. They looked back at every interval; now they did not see their fancied pursuer, — now he emerged again into view; now — yes — *he* also was running. "Faster, faster, Madeline, for God's sake! He is gaining upon us!" cried Ellinor. The path grew more wild, and the trees more thick and frequent: at every cluster that marked their progress they saw the stranger closer and closer; at length a sudden break, a sudden turn in the landscape, — a broad plain burst upon them, and in the midst of it the student's solitary abode!

"Thank Heaven, we are safe!" cried Madeline. She turned once more to look for the stranger; in so doing, her foot struck against a fragment of stone, and she fell with great violence to the ground. She endeavored to rise, but found herself, at first, unable to stir from the spot. In this state, however, she looked back, and saw the traveller at some little distance. But he also halted, and after a moment's seeming deliberation turned aside, and was lost among the bushes.

With great difficulty Ellinor now assisted Madeline to rise; her ankle was violently sprained, and she could not put her foot to the ground. But though she had evinced so much dread at the apparition of the stranger, she now testified an almost equal degree of fortitude in bearing pain. "I am not much hurt, Ellinor," she said, faintly smiling, to encourage her sister, who supported her in speechless alarm; "but what is to be done? I cannot use this foot. How shall we get home?"

"But are you sure you are not much hurt?" said poor Ellinor, almost crying. "Lean on me, — heavier, pray! Only try and reach the house, and we can then stay there till Mr. Aram sends home for the carriage."

"But what will he think? How strange it will seem!" said Madeline, the color once more visiting her cheek, which a moment since had been blanched as pale as death.

"Is this a time for scruples and ceremony?" said Ellinor. "Come! I entreat you, come; if you linger thus, the man may take courage and attack us yet. There! that's right! Is the pain very great?"

"I do not mind the pain," murmured Madeline; "but if he should think we intrude? His habits are so reserved, so secluded; indeed I fear —"

"Intrude!" interrupted Ellinor. "Do you think so ill of him? Do you suppose that, hermit as he is, he has lost common humanity? But lean more on me, dearest; you do not know how strong I am!"

Thus alternately chiding, caressing, and encouraging her sister, Ellinor led on the sufferer till they had crossed the plain, though with slowness and labor, and stood before the porch of the recluse's house. They had looked back from time to time, but the cause of so much alarm appeared no more. This they deemed a sufficient evidence of the justice of their apprehensions.

Madeline even now would fain have detained her sister's hand from the bell that hung without the porch, half imbedded in ivy; but Ellinor, out of patience — as she well might be — with her sister's unseasonable prudery, refused any longer delay. So singularly still and solitary was the plain around the house that the sound of the bell breaking the silence had in it something startling, and appeared, in its sudden and shrill voice, a profanation of the deep tranquillity of the spot. They did not wait long; a step was heard within, the door was slowly unbarred, and the student himself stood before them.

He was a man who might perhaps have numbered some five and thirty years; but at a hasty glance he would have seemed

considerably younger. He was above the ordinary stature; though a gentle, and not ungraceful, bend in the neck, rather than the shoulders, somewhat curtailed his proper advantages of height. His frame was thin and slender, but well knit and fair proportioned. Nature had originally cast his form in an athletic mould; but sedentary habits and the wear of mind seemed somewhat to have impaired her gifts. His cheek was pale and delicate; yet it was rather the delicacy of thought than of weak health. His hair, which was long, and of a rich and deep brown, was thrown back from his face and temples, and left a broad, high, majestic forehead utterly unrelieved and bare; and on the brow there was not a single wrinkle, — it was as smooth as it might have been some fifteen years ago. There was a singular calmness and, so to speak, profundity of thought eloquent upon its clear expanse, which suggested the idea of one who had passed his life rather in contemplation than emotion. It was a face that a physiognomist would have loved to look upon, so much did it speak both of the refinement and the dignity of intellect.

Such was the person — if pictures convey a faithful resemblance — of a man certainly among the most eminent in his day for various and profound learning, and especially for a genius wholly self-taught, yet never contented to repose upon the wonderful stores it had laboriously accumulated.

He now stood before the two girls silent and evidently surprised; and it would have been no unworthy subject for a picture, — that ivied porch; that still spot; Madeline's reclining and subdued form and downcast eyes; the eager face of Ellinor, about to narrate the nature and cause of their intrusion; and the pale student himself, thus suddenly aroused from his solitary meditations, and converted into the protector of beauty.

No sooner did Aram learn from Ellinor the outline of their story and Madeline's accident than his countenance and manner testified the liveliest and most eager interest. Madeline was inexpressibly touched and surprised at the kindly and respectful earnestness with which this recluse scholar, usually so cold and abstracted in mood, assisted and led her into the

house, the sympathy he expressed for her pain, the sincerity of his tone, the compassion of his eyes; and as those dark and, to use her own thought, unfathomable orbs bent admiringly and yet so gently upon her, Madeline, even in spite of her pain, felt an indescribable, a delicious thrill at her heart which in the presence of no one else had she ever experienced before.

Aram now summoned the only domestic his house possessed, who appeared in the form of an old woman whom he seemed to have selected from the whole neighborhood as the person most in keeping with the rigid seclusion he preserved. She was exceedingly deaf, and was a proverb in the village for her extreme taciturnity. Poor old Margaret! she was a widow, and had lost ten children by early deaths. There was a time when her gayety had been as noticeable as her reserve was now. In spite of her infirmity, she was not slow in comprehending the accident Madeline had met with; and she busied herself with a promptness which showed that her misfortunes had not deadened her natural kindness of disposition, in preparing fomentations and bandages for the wounded foot.

Meanwhile Aram undertook to seek the manor-house and bring back the old family coach, which had dozed inactively in its shelter for the last six months, to convey the sufferer home.

"No, Mr. Aram," said Madeline, coloring; "pray do not go yourself. Consider, the man may still be loitering on the road. He is armed; good heavens! if he should meet you!"

"Fear not, madam," said Aram, with a faint smile. "*I* also keep arms, even in this obscure and safe retreat; and to satisfy you, I will not neglect to carry them with me."

As he spoke, he took from the wainscot, where they hung, a brace of large horse-pistols, slung them round him by a leather belt, and flinging over his person, to conceal weapons so alarming to any less dangerous passenger he might encounter, the long cloak then usually worn in inclement seasons, as an outer garment, he turned to depart.

"But are they loaded?" asked Ellinor.

Aram answered briefly in the affirmative. It was somewhat singular, but the sisters did not then remark it, that a man so peaceable in his pursuits, and seemingly possessed of no valuables that could tempt cupidity, should in that spot, where crime was never heard of, use such habitual precaution.

When the door closed upon him, and while the old woman relieved the anguish of the sprain with a light hand and soothing lotions, which she had shown some skill in preparing, Madeline cast glances of interest and curiosity around the apartment into which she had had the rare good fortune to obtain admittance.

The house had belonged to a family of some note whose heirs had outstripped their fortunes. It had been long deserted and uninhabited; and when Aram settled in those parts, the proprietor was too glad to get rid of the encumbrance of an empty house at a nominal rent. The solitude of the place had been the main attraction to Aram; and as he possessed what would be considered a very extensive assortment of books, even for a library of these days, he required a larger apartment than he would have been able to obtain in an abode more compact and more suitable to his fortunes and mode of living.

The room in which the sisters now found themselves was the most spacious in the house, and was indeed of considerable dimensions. It contained in front one large window, jutting from the wall. Opposite was an antique and high mantelpiece of black oak. The rest of the room was walled from the floor to the roof with books; volumes of all languages, and it might even be said, without much exaggeration, upon all sciences, were strewed around, on the chairs, the tables, or the floor. By the window stood the student's desk and a large old-fashioned oak chair. A few papers, filled with astronomical calculations, lay on the desk, and these were all the witnesses of the *result* of study. Indeed, Aram does not appear to have been a man much inclined to reproduce the learning he acquired; what he wrote was in very small proportion to what he had read.

So high and grave was the scholar's reputation that the

retreat and sanctum of so many learned hours would have been interesting, even to one who could not appreciate learning; but to Madeline, with her peculiar disposition and traits of mind, we may readily conceive that the room presented a powerful and pleasing charm. As the elder sister looked round in silence, Ellinor attempted to draw the old woman into conversation. She would fain have elicited some particulars of the habits and daily life of the recluse; but the deafness of their attendant was so obstinate and hopeless that she was forced to give up the attempt in despair. "I fear," said she at last, her good-nature so far overcome by impatience as not to forbid a slight yawn, "I fear we shall have a dull time of it till my father arrives. Just consider! the fat black mares, never too fast, *can* only creep along that broken path, — for road there is none; it will be quite night before the coach arrives."

"I am sorry, dear Ellinor, my awkwardness should occasion you so stupid an evening."

"Oh!" cried Ellinor, throwing her arms around her sister's neck, "it is not for myself I spoke; and, indeed, I am delighted to think we have got into this wizard's den and seen the instruments of his art. But I do so trust Mr. Aram will not meet that terrible man."

"Nay," said the prouder Madeline, "he is armed, and it is but one man. I feel too high a respect for him to allow myself much fear."

"But these bookmen are not often heroes," remarked Ellinor, laughing.

"For shame," said Madeline, the color mounting to her forehead. "Do you not remember how, last summer, Eugene Aram rescued Dame Grenfeld's child from the bull, though at the literal peril of his own life? And who but Eugene Aram, when the floods in the year before swept along the low lands by Fairleigh, went day after day to rescue the persons, or even to save the goods of those poor people, — at a time, too, when the boldest villagers would not hazard themselves across the waters? But bless me, Ellinor, what is the matter? You turn pale, you tremble!"

"Hush!" said Ellinor, under her breath; and putting her

finger to her mouth, she rose and stole lightly to the window. She had observed the figure of a man pass by; and now, as she gained the window, she saw him halt by the porch, and recognized the formidable stranger. Presently the bell sounded, and the old woman, familiar with its shrill sound, rose from her kneeling position beside the sufferer to attend to the summons. Ellinor sprang forward and detained her; the poor old woman stared at her in amazement, wholly unable to comprehend her abrupt gestures and her rapid language. It was with considerable difficulty, and after repeated efforts, that she at length impressed the dulled sense of the crone with the nature of their alarm and the expediency of refusing admittance to the stranger. Meanwhile the bell had rung again,—again, and the third time, with a prolonged violence which testified the impatience of the applicant. As soon as the good dame had satisfied herself as to Ellinor's meaning, she could no longer be accused of unreasonable taciturnity; she wrung her hands, and poured forth a volley of lamentations and fears which effectually relieved Ellinor from the dread of her unheeding the admonition. Satisfied at having done thus much, Ellinor now herself hastened to the door, and secured the ingress with an additional bolt; and then, as the thought flashed upon her, returned to the old woman, and made her, with an easier effort than before, now that her senses were sharpened by fear, comprehend the necessity of securing the back entrance also. Both hastened away to effect this precaution, and Madeline, who herself desired Ellinor to accompany the old woman, was left alone. She kept her eyes fixed on the window with a strange sentiment of dread at being thus left in so helpless a situation; and though a door of no ordinary dimensions and doubly locked interposed between herself and the intruder, she expected in breathless terror, every instant, to see the form of the ruffian burst into the apartment. As she thus sat and looked, she shudderingly saw the man, tired perhaps of repeating a summons so ineffectual, come to the window and look pryingly within. Their eyes met; Madeline had not the power to shriek. Would he break through the window? That was her only idea, and it deprived her of words, almost of

sense. He gazed upon her evident terror for a moment with a grim smile of contempt; he then knocked at the window, and his voice broke harshly on a silence yet more dreadful than the interruption.

"Ho, ho! so there is some life stirring. I beg pardon, madame, is Mr. Aram — Eugene Aram — within?"

"No," said Madeline, faintly; and then, sensible that her voice did not reach him, she reiterated the answer in a louder tone. The man, as if satisfied, made a rude inclination of his head, and withdrew from the window. Ellinor now returned, and with difficulty Madeline found words to explain to her what had passed. It will be conceived that the two young ladies waited for the arrival of their father with no lukewarm expectation. The stranger, however, appeared no more; and in about an hour, to their inexpressible joy, they heard the rumbling sound of the old coach as it rolled towards the house. This time there was no delay in unbarring the door.

CHAPTER IV.

THE SOLILOQUY AND THE CHARACTER OF A RECLUSE. — THE INTERRUPTION.

> Or let my lamp at midnight hour
> Be seen in some high lonely tower,
> Where I may oft outwatch the Bear,
> Or thrice great Hermes, and unsphere
> The spirit of Plato. — Milton: *Il Penseroso.*

As Aram assisted the beautiful Madeline into the carriage; as he listened to her sweet voice; as he marked the grateful expression of her soft eyes; as he felt the slight yet warm pressure of her fairy hand, — that vague sensation of delight which preludes love, for the first time in his sterile and solitary life, agitated his breast. Lester held out his hand to him with a frank cordiality which the scholar could not resist.

"Do not let us be strangers, Mr. Aram," said he, warmly. "It is not often that I press for companionship out of my own circle; but in your company I should find pleasure as well as instruction. Let us break the ice boldly, and at once. Come and dine with me to-morrow, and Ellinor shall sing to us in the evening."

The excuse died upon Aram's lips. Another glance at Madeline conquered the remains of his reserve, — he accepted the invitation; and he could not but mark, with an unfamiliar emotion of the heart, that the eyes of Madeline sparkled as he did so.

With an abstracted air, and arms folded across his breast, he gazed after the carriage till the winding of the valley snatched it from his view. He then, waking from his revery with a start, turned into the house, and carefully closing and barring the door, mounted the slow steps to the lofty chamber with which, the better to indulge his astronomical researches, he had crested his lonely abode.

It was now night. The heavens broadened round him in all the loving yet august tranquillity of the season and the hour; the stars bathed the living atmosphere with a solemn light; and above, about, around, —

> "The holy time was quiet as a nun,
> Breathless with adoration."

He looked forth upon the deep and ineffable stillness of the night, and indulged the reflections that it suggested.

"Ye mystic lights," said he, soliloquizing, "worlds upon worlds, infinite, incalculable, bright defiers of rest and change, rolling forever above our petty sea of mortality as, wave after wave, we fret forth our little life and sink into the black abyss, — can we look upon you, note your appointed order and your unvarying courses, and not feel that we are indeed the poorest puppets of an all-pervading and resistless destiny? Shall we see throughout creation each marvel fulfilling its pre-ordered fate, — no wandering from its orbit, no variation in its seasons, — and yet imagine that the Arch-ordainer will hold back the tides He has sent from their unseen source, at our miserable

bidding? Shall we think that our prayers can avert a doom woven with the skein of events? To change a particle of our fate might change the destiny of millions. Shall the link forsake the chain, and yet the chain be unbroken? Away, then, with our vague repinings and our blind demands! All must walk onward to their goal; be he the wisest who looks not one step behind. The colors of our existence were doomed before our birth, — our sorrows and our crimes; millions of ages back, when this hoary earth was peopled by other kinds, yea, ere its atoms had formed one layer of its present soil, the eternal and all-seeing Ruler of the universe, Destiny or God, had here fixed the moment of our birth and the limits of our career. What, then, is crime? Fate! What life? Submission!"

Such were the strange and dark thoughts which, too familiar to his musings, now obtruded their mournful dogmas on his mind. He sought a fairer subject for meditation, and Madeline Lester rose before him.

Eugene Aram was a man whose whole life seemed to have been one sacrifice to knowledge. What is termed "pleasure" had no attraction for him. From the mature manhood at which he had arrived, he looked back along his youth, and recognized no youthful folly. Love he had hitherto regarded with a cold though not an incurious eye; intemperance had never lured him to a momentary self-abandonment. Even the innocent relaxations with which the austerest minds relieve their accustomed toils had had no power to draw him from his beloved researches. The delight *monstrari digito*, the gratification of triumphant wisdom, the whispers of an elevated vanity, existed not for his self-dependent and solitary heart. He was one of those earnest and high-wrought enthusiasts who now are almost extinct upon earth, and whom Romance has not hitherto attempted to portray, — men not uncommon in the last century, who were devoted to knowledge, yet disdainful of its fame; who lived for nothing else than to learn. From store to store, from treasure to treasure, they proceeded in exulting labor, and having accumulated all, they bestowed nought; they were the arch-misers of the wealth of letters.

Wrapped in obscurity, in some sheltered nook remote from the great stir of men, they passed a life at once unprofitable and glorious; the least part of what they ransacked would appall the industry of a modern student, yet the most superficial of modern students might effect more for mankind. They lived among oracles, but they gave none forth. And yet, even in this very barrenness there seems something high; it was a rare and great spectacle, — men living aloof from the roar and strife of the passions that raged below, devoting themselves to the knowledge which is our purification and our immortality on earth, and yet deaf and blind to the allurements of the vanity which generally accompanies research; *refusing* the ignorant homage of their kind, making their sublime motive their only meed, adoring Wisdom for her sole sake, and set apart in the populous universe like those remoter stars which interchange no light with earth, gild not our darkness and color not our air.

From his youth to the present period, Aram had *dwelt* little in cities, though he had visited many; yet he could scarcely be called ignorant of mankind: there seems something intuitive in the science which teaches us the knowledge of our race. Some men emerge from their seclusion, and find all at once a power to dart into the minds and drag forth the motives of those they see: it is a sort of second sight, born with them, not acquired. And Aram, it may be, rendered yet more acute by his profound and habitual investigations of our metaphysical frame, never quitted his solitude to mix with others without penetrating into the broad traits or prevalent infirmities their characters possessed. In this, indeed, he differed from the scholar tribe, and even in abstraction was mechanically vigilant and observant. Much in his nature, had early circumstances given it a different bias, would have fitted him for worldly superiority and command. A resistless energy, an unbroken perseverance, a profound and scheming and subtle thought, a genius fertile in resources, a tongue clothed with eloquence, — all, had his ambition so chosen, might have given him the same empire over the physical that he had now attained over the intellectual world. It could not be said

that Aram wanted benevolence, but it was dashed and mixed with a certain scorn: the benevolence was the offspring of his nature; the scorn seemed the result of his pursuits. He would feed the birds from his window; he would tread aside to avoid the worm on his path; were one of his own tribe in danger he would save him at the hazard of his life, — yet in his heart he despised men, and believed them beyond amelioration. Unlike the present race of schoolmen, who incline to the consoling hope of human perfectibility, he saw in the gloomy past but a dark prophecy of the future. As Napoleon wept over one wounded soldier in the field of battle, yet ordered, without emotion, thousands to a certain death, so Aram would have sacrificed himself for an individual, but would not have sacrificed a momentary gratification for his race. And this sentiment towards men, at once of high disdain and profound despondency, was perhaps the cause why he rioted in indolence upon his extraordinary mental wealth, and could not be persuaded either to dazzle the world or to serve it. But by little and little his fame had broken forth from the limits with which he would have walled it. A man who had taught himself, under singular difficulties, nearly all the languages of the civilized earth; the profound mathematician, the elaborate antiquarian, the abstruse philologist, uniting with his graver lore the more florid accomplishments of science, from the scholastic trifling of heraldry to the gentle learning of herbs and flowers, — could scarcely hope for utter obscurity in that day when all intellectual acquirement was held in high honor, and its possessors were drawn together into a sort of brotherhood by the fellowship of their pursuits. And though Aram gave little or nothing to the world himself, he was ever willing to communicate to others any benefit or honor derivable from his researches. On the altar of science he kindled no light, but the fragrant oil in the lamps of his more pious brethren was largely borrowed from his stores. From almost every college in Europe came to his obscure abode letters of acknowledgment or inquiry, and few foreign cultivators of learning visited this country without seeking an interview with Aram. He received them with all the

modesty and the courtesy that characterized his demeanor; but it was noticeable that he never allowed these interruptions to be more than temporary. He proffered no hospitality, and shrank back from all offers of friendship; the interview lasted its hour, and was seldom renewed. Patronage was not less distasteful to him than sociality. Some occasional visits and condescensions of the great he had received with a stern haughtiness rather than his habitual subdued urbanity. The precise amount of his fortune was not known; his wants were so few that what would have been poverty to others might easily have been competence to him; and the only evidence he manifested of the command of money, was in his extended and various library.

He had been now about two years settled in his present retreat. Unsocial as he was, every one in the neighborhood loved him; even the reserve of a man so eminent, arising as it was supposed to do from a painful modesty, had in it something winning; and he had been known to evince, on great occasions, a charity and a courage in the service of others which removed from the seclusion of his habits the semblance of misanthropy and of avarice. The peasant threw kindly pity into his respectful greeting as in his homeward walk he encountered the pale and thoughtful student, with the folded arms and downcast eyes which characterized the abstraction of his mood; and the village maiden, as she courtesied by him, stole a glance at his handsome but melancholy countenance, and told her sweetheart she was certain the poor scholar had been crossed in love!

And thus passed the student's life; perhaps its monotony and dulness required less compassion than they received: no man can judge of the happiness of another. As the moon plays upon the waves, and seems to our eyes to favor with a peculiar beam one long track amidst the waters, leaving the rest in comparative obscurity, yet all the while she is no niggard in her lustre, for though the rays that meet not our eyes seem to us as though they were not, yet *she*, with an equal and unfavoring loveliness, mirrors herself on every wave, — even so, perhaps, happiness falls with the same brightness

and power over the whole expanse of life, though to our limited eyes it seems only to rest on those billows from which the ray is reflected on our sight.

From his contemplations, of whatsoever nature, Aram was now aroused by a loud summons at the door; the clock had gone eleven. Who at that late hour, when the whole village was buried in sleep, could demand admittance? He recollected that Madeline had said the stranger who had so alarmed them had inquired for him; at that recollection his cheek suddenly blanched. But again, that stranger was surely only some poor traveller who had heard of his wonted charity, and had called to solicit relief; for he had not met the stranger on the road to Lester's house, and he had naturally set down the apprehensions of his fair visitants to mere female timidity. Who could this be? No humble wayfarer would at that hour crave assistance, — some disaster, perhaps, in the village! From his lofty chamber he looked forth and saw the stars watch quietly over the scattered cottages and the dark foliage that slept breathlessly around. All was still as death, but it seemed the stillness of innocence and security. Again, the bell again! He thought he heard his name shouted without; he strode once or twice irresolutely to and fro the chamber; and then his step grew firm and his native courage returned. His pistols were still girded round him; he looked to the priming, and muttered some incoherent words; he then descended the stairs and slowly unbarred the door. Without the porch, the moonlight full upon his harsh features and sturdy frame, stood the ill-omened traveller.

CHAPTER V.

A DINNER AT THE SQUIRE'S HALL. — A CONVERSATION BETWEEN TWO RETIRED MEN WITH DIFFERENT OBJECTS IN RETIREMENT. — DISTURBANCE FIRST INTRODUCED INTO A PEACEFUL FAMILY.

CAN he not be sociable? — *Troilus and Cressida.*

Subit quippe etiam ipsius inertiæ dulcedo; et invisa primo desidia postremo amatur.[1] — TACITUS.

How use doth breed a habit in a man!
This shadowy desert, unfrequented woods,
I better brook than flourishing peopled towns. — *Winter's Tale.*

THE next day, faithful to his appointment, Aram arrived at Lester's. The good squire received him with a warm cordiality, and Madeline with a blush and a smile that ought to have been more grateful to him than acknowledgments. She was still a prisoner to the sofa; but in compliment to Aram, the sofa was wheeled into the hall where they dined, so that she was not absent from the repast. It was a pleasant room, that old hall! Though it was summer, more for cheerfulness than warmth the log burned on the spacious hearth; but at the same time the latticed windows were thrown open, and the fresh yet sunny air stole in, rich from the embrace of the woodbine and clematis, which clung around the casement.

A few old pictures were panelled in the open wainscot, and here and there the horns of the mighty stag adorned the walls, and united with the cheeriness of comfort associations of that of enterprise. The good old board was crowded with the luxuries meet for a country squire, — the speckled trout fresh from the stream, and the four-year-old mutton modestly

[1] "Forasmuch as the very sweetness of idleness stealthily introduces itself into the mind, and the sloth, which was at first hateful, becomes at length beloved."

disclaiming its own excellent merits, by affecting the shape and assuming the adjuncts of venison. Then for the confectionery, — it was worthy of Ellinor, to whom that department generally fell; and we should scarcely be surprised to find, though we venture not to affirm, that its delicate fabrication owed more to her than superintendence. Then the ale, and the cider with rosemary in the bowl, were incomparable potations; and to the gooseberry wine, which would have filled Mrs. Primrose with envy, was added the more generous warmth of port which in the squire's younger days had been the talk of the country, and which had now lost none of its attributes save "the original brightness" of its color.

But (the wine excepted) these various dainties met with slight honor from their abstemious guest; and — for though habitually reserved he was rarely gloomy — they remarked that he seemed unusually fitful and sombre in his mood. Something appeared to rest upon his mind from which, by the excitement of wine and occasional bursts of eloquence more animated than ordinary, he seemed striving to escape; and at length he apparently succeeded. Naturally enough the conversation turned upon the curiosities and scenery of the country round; and here Aram shone with a peculiar grace. Vividly alive to the influences of Nature, and minutely acquainted with its varieties, he invested every hill and glade to which remark recurred with the poetry of his descriptions; and from his research he gave even scenes the most familiar a charm and interest which had been strange to them till then. To this stream some romantic legend had once attached itself, long forgotten and now revived; that moor, so barren to an ordinary eye, was yet productive of some rare and curious herb, whose properties afforded scope for lively description; that old mound was yet rife in attraction to one versed in antiquities and able to explain its origin, and from such explanation deduce a thousand classic or Celtic episodes.

No subject was so homely or so trite but the knowledge that had neglected nothing was able to render it luminous and new. And as he spoke, the scholar's countenance brightened, and

his voice, at first hesitating and low, compelled the attention to its earnest and winning music. Lester himself, a man who in his long retirement had not forgotten the attractions of intellectual society, nor even neglected a certain cultivation of intellectual pursuits, enjoyed a pleasure that he had not experienced for years. The gay Ellinor was fascinated into admiration; and Madeline, the most silent of the group, drank in every word, unconscious of the sweet poison she imbibed. Walter alone seemed not carried away by the eloquence of their guest. He preserved an unadmiring and sullen demeanor, and every now and then regarded Aram with looks of suspicion and dislike. This was more remarkable when the men were left alone; and Lester, in surprise and anger, darted significant and admonitory glances towards his nephew, which at length seemed to rouse him into a more hospitable bearing. As the cool of the evening now came on, Lester proposed to Aram to enjoy it without, previous to returning to the parlor, to which the ladies had retired. Walter excused himself from joining them. The host and the guest accordingly strolled forth alone.

"Your solitude," said Lester, smiling, "is far deeper and less broken than mine: do you never find it irksome?"

"Can Humanity be at all times contented?" said Aram. "No stream, howsoever secret or subterranean, glides on in eternal tranquillity."

"You allow, then, that you feel some occasional desire for a more active and animated life?"

"Nay," answered Aram; "that is scarcely a fair corollary from my remark. I may at times feel the weariness of existence, — the *tedium vitæ;* but I know well that the cause is not to be remedied by a change from tranquillity to agitation. The objects of the great world are to be pursued only by the excitement of the passions. The passions are at once our masters and our deceivers: they urge us onward, yet present no limit to our progress. The farther we proceed, the more dim and shadowy grows the goal. It is impossible for a man who leads the life of the world, the life of the passions, ever to experience content. For the life of the passions is that of

a perpetual desire; but a state of content is the absence of all desire. Thus philosophy has become another name for mental quietude; and all wisdom points to a life of intellectual indifference as the happiest which earth can bestow."

"This may be true enough," said Lester, reluctantly; "but—"

"But what?"

"A something at our hearts—a secret voice, an involuntary impulse—rebels against it, and points to action,—action, as the true sphere of man."

A slight smile curved the lip of the student; he avoided, however, the argument, and remarked,—

"Yet, if you think so, the world lies before you: why not return to it?"

"Because constant habit is stronger than occasional impulse; and my seclusion, after all, has its sphere of action, has its object."

"All seclusion has."

"All? Scarcely so, for me, I have my object of interest in my children."

"And mine is in my books."

"And engaged in your object, does not the whisper of Fame ever animate you with the desire to go forth into the world and receive the homage that would await you?"

"Listen to me," replied Aram. "When I was a boy I went once to a theatre. The tragedy of 'Hamlet' was performed,—a play full of the noblest thoughts, the subtlest morality. The audience listened with attention, with admiration, with applause. I said to myself, when the curtain fell, 'It must be a glorious thing to obtain this empire over men's intellects and emotions.' But now an Italian mountebank appeared on the stage,—a man of extraordinary personal strength and sleight of hand. He performed a variety of juggling tricks, and distorted his body into a thousand surprising and unnatural postures. The audience were transported beyond themselves; if they had felt delight in 'Hamlet,' they glowed with rapture at the mountebank: they had listened with attention to the lofty thought, but they were snatched from

themselves by the marvel of the strange posture. 'Enough, said I; 'I correct my former notion. Where is the glory of ruling men's minds and commanding their admiration, when a greater enthusiasm is excited by mere bodily agility than was kindled by the most wonderful emanations of a genius little less than divine?' I have never forgotten the impression of that evening."

Lester attempted to combat the truth of the illustration; and thus conversing, they passed on through the village green, when the gaunt form of Corporal Bunting arrested their progress.

"Beg pardon, squire," said he, with a military salute; "beg pardon, your honor," bowing to Aram. "But I wanted to speak to you, squire, 'bout the rent of the bit cot yonder: times very hard, pay scarce, and —"

"You desire a little delay, Bunting, eh? Well, well, we'll see about it; look up at the Hall to-morrow. Mr. Walter, I know, wants to consult you about letting the water from the great pond, and you must give us your opinion of the new brewing."

"Thank your honor, thank you; much obliged, I 'm sure. I hope your honor liked the trout I sent up. Beg pardon, Master Aram, mayhap you would condescend to accept a few fish, now and then; they 're very fine in these streams, as you probably know. If you please to let me, I 'll send some up by the old 'oman to-morrow, — that is, if the day 's cloudy a bit."

The scholar thanked the good Bunting, and would have proceeded onward; but the corporal was in a familiar mood.

"Beg pardon, beg pardon; but strange-looking dog here last evening, — asked after you; said you were old friend of his; trotted off in your direction. Hope all was right, master? — augh!"

"All right!" repeated Aram, fixing his eyes on the corporal, who had concluded his speech with a significant wink, and pausing a full moment before he continued; then, as if satisfied with his survey, he added: "Ay, ay, I know whom you mean: he had become acquainted with me some years ago. So you saw him! What said he to you — of me?"

"Augh! little enough, Master Aram; he seemed to think only of satisfying his own appetite, — said he 'd been a soldier."

"A soldier? — true!"

"Never told me the regiment, though, — shy! Did he ever desert, pray, your honor?"

"I don't know," answered Aram, turning away; "I know little, very little, about him." He was going away, but stopped to add: "The man called on me last night for assistance; the lateness of the hour a little alarmed me. I gave him what I could afford, and he has now proceeded on his journey."

"Oh! then he won't take up his quarters hereabouts, your honor?" said the corporal, inquiringly.

"No, no; good evening."

"What! this singular stranger, who so frightened my poor girls, is really known to you," said Lester, in surprise. "Pray, is he as formidable as he seems to them?"

"Scarcely," said Aram, with great composure; "he has been a wild roving fellow all his life, but — but there is little real harm in him. He is certainly ill-favored enough to — " Here, interrupting himself, and breaking into a new sentence, Aram added: "But at all events he will frighten your daughters no more, — he has proceeded on his journey northward. And now, yonder lies my way home. Good evening." The abruptness of this farewell did indeed take Lester by surprise.

"Why, you will not leave me yet? The young ladies expect your return to them for an hour or so. What will they think of such desertion? No, no; come back, my good friend, and suffer me by and by to walk some part of the way home with you."

"Pardon me," said Aram, "I must leave you now. As to the ladies," he added, with a faint smile, half in melancholy, half in scorn, "I am not one whom they could miss. Forgive me if I seem unceremonious. Adieu!"

Lester at first felt a little offended; but when he recalled the peculiar habits of the scholar he saw that the only way

to hope for a continuance of that society which had so pleased him was to indulge Aram at first in his unsocial inclinations, rather than annoy him by a troublesome hospitality: he therefore, without further discourse, shook hands with him, and they parted.

When Lester regained the little parlor he found his nephew sitting, silent and discontented, by the window. Madeline had taken up a book, and Ellinor, in an opposite corner, was plying her needle with an air of earnestness and quiet very unlike her usual playful and cheerful vivacity. There was evidently a cloud over the group; the good Lester regarded them with a searching, yet kindly eye.

"And what has happened?" said he. "Something of mighty import, I am sure, or I should have heard my pretty Ellinor's merry laugh long before I crossed the threshold."

Ellinor colored and sighed, and worked faster than ever. Walter threw open the window and whistled a favorite air quite out of tune. Lester smiled, and seated himself by his nephew.

"Well, Walter," said he, "I feel, for the first time these ten years, that I have a right to scold you. What on earth could make you so inhospitable to your uncle's guest? You eyed the poor student as if you wished him among the books of Alexandria!"

"I would he were burned with them!" answered Walter, sharply. "He seems to have added the black art to his other accomplishments, and bewitched my fair cousins here into a forgetfulness of all but himself."

"Not me!" said Ellinor, eagerly, and looking up.

"No, not you, that's true enough; you are too just, too kind,—it is a pity that Madeline is not more like you."

"My dear Walter," said Madeline, "what is the matter? You accuse me of what? Being attentive to a man whom it is impossible to hear without attention."

"There!" cried Walter, passionately, "you confess it. And so for a stranger,—a cold, vain, pedantic egotist, you can shut your ears and heart to those who have known and loved you all your life, and—and—"

"Vain!" interrupted Madeline, unheeding the latter part of Walter's address.

"Pedantic!" repeated her father.

"Yes, I say vain, pedantic!" cried Walter, working himself into a passion. "What on earth but the love of display could make him monopolize the whole conversation? What but pedantry could make him bring out those anecdotes and allusions and descriptions, or whatever you call them, respecting every old wall or stupid plant in the country?"

"I never thought you guilty of meanness before," said Lester, gravely.

"Meanness!"

"Yes; for is it not mean to be jealous of superior acquirements, instead of admiring them?"

"What has been the use of those acquirements? Has he benefited mankind by them? Show me the poet, the historian, the orator, and I will yield to none of you,—no, not to Madeline herself, in homage of their genius; but the mere creature of books, the dry and sterile collector of other men's learning,—no, no. What should I admire in such a machine of literature, except a waste of perseverance? And Madeline calls him handsome too!"

At this sudden turn from declamation to reproach, Lester laughed outright; and his nephew, in high anger, rose and left the room.

"Who could have thought Walter so foolish?" said Madeline.

"Nay," observed Ellinor, gently, "it is the folly of a kind heart, after all. He feels sore at our seeming to prefer another—I mean another's conversation—to his!"

Lester turned round in his chair and regarded with a serious look the faces of both sisters.

"My dear Ellinor," said he, when he had finished his survey, "you are a kind girl,—come and kiss me!"

CHAPTER VI.

THE BEHAVIOR OF THE STUDENT. — A SUMMER SCENE. — ARAM'S CONVERSATION WITH WALTER, AND SUBSEQUENT COLLOQUY WITH HIMSELF.

> THE soft season, the firmament serene,
> The loun illuminate air, and firth amene
> The silver scalit fishes on the grete,
> O'er-thwart clear streams sprinkillond for the heat.
>
> GAWIN DOUGLAS.

> Ilia subter
> Cæcum vulnus habes; sed lato balteus auro
> Prætegit.[1] — PERSIUS.

SEVERAL days elapsed before the family of the manor-house encountered Aram again. The old woman came once or twice to present the inquiries of her master as to Miss Lester's accident, but Aram himself did not appear. This want of interest certainly offended Madeline, although she still drew upon herself Walter's displeasure by disputing and resenting the unfavorable strictures on the scholar in which that young gentleman delighted to indulge. By degrees, however, as the days passed without maturing the acquaintance which Walter had disapproved, the youth relaxed in his attacks, and seemed to yield to the remonstrances of his uncle. Lester had, indeed, conceived an especial inclination towards the recluse. Any man of reflection who has lived for some time alone, and who suddenly meets with one who calls forth in him, and without labor or contradiction, the thoughts which have sprung up in his solitude, scarcely felt in their growth, will comprehend the new zest, the awakening, as it were, of the mind, which Lester found in the conversation of Eugene Aram. His solitary walk (for his nephew had the separate pursuits of youth) appeared to him more dull than before, and he longed

[1] "You have a wound deep hidden in your heart but the broad belt of gold conceals it."

to renew an intercourse which had given to the monotony of his life both variety and relief. He called twice upon Aram; but the student was, or affected to be, from home, and an invitation that Lester sent him, though couched in friendly terms, was, but with great semblance of kindness, refused.

"See, Walter," said Lester, disconcerted, as he finished reading the refusal,—"see what your rudeness has effected. I am quite convinced that Aram (evidently a man of susceptible as well as retired mind) observed the coldness of your manner towards him, and that thus *you* have deprived me of the only society which, in this wilderness of boors and savages, gave me any gratification."

Walter replied apologetically, but his uncle turned away with a greater appearance of anger than his placid features were wont to exhibit; and Walter, cursing the innocent cause of his uncle's displeasure towards him, took up his fishing-rod and went out alone, in no happy or exhilarated mood.

It was waxing towards eve,—an hour especially lovely in the month of June, and not without reason favored by the angler. Walter sauntered across the rich and fragrant fields, and came soon into a sheltered valley, through which the brooklet wound its shadowy way. Along the margin the grass sprang up long and matted, and profuse with a thousand weeds and flowers,—the children of the teeming June. Here the ivy-leafed bell-flower, and not far from it the common enchanter's nightshade, the silver-weed, and the water-aven; and by the hedges, that now and then neared the water, the gelder-rose and the white briony, overrunning the thicket with its emerald leaves and luxuriant flowers. And here and there, silvering the bushes, the elder offered its snowy tribute to the summer. All the insect youth were abroad, with their bright wings and glancing motion; and from the lower depths of the bushes the blackbird darted across, or higher and unseen the first cuckoo of the eve began its continuous and mellow note. All this cheeriness and gloss of life, which enamour us with the few bright days of the English summer, make the poetry in an angler's life, and convert every idler at heart into a moralist, and not a gloomy one, for the time.

Softened by the quiet beauty and voluptuousness around him, Walter's thoughts assumed a more gentle dye, and he broke out into the old lines,—

> "Sweet day, so soft, so calm, so bright,
> The bridal of the earth and sky,"—

as he dipped his line into the current and drew it across the shadowy hollows beneath the bank. The river-gods were not, however, in a favorable mood, and after waiting in vain for some time, in a spot in which he was usually successful, he proceeded slowly along the margin of the brooklet, crushing the reeds at every step into that fresh and delicious odor which furnished Bacon with one of his most beautiful comparisons.

He thought, as he proceeded, that beneath a tree that overhung the waters in the narrowest part of their channel, he heard a voice, and as he approached he recognized it as Aram's. A curve in the stream brought him close by the spot, and he saw the student half-reclined beneath the tree, and muttering, but at broken intervals, to himself.

The words were so scattered that Walter did not trace their clew, but involuntarily he stopped short within a few feet of the soliloquist; and Aram, suddenly turning round, beheld him. A fierce and abrupt change broke over the scholar's countenance; his cheek grew now pale, now flushed; and his brows knit over his flashing and dark eyes with an intent anger that was the more withering from its contrast to the usual calmness of his features. Walter drew back; but Aram, stalking directly up to him, gazed into his face as if he would read his very soul.

"What! eavesdropping?" said he, with a ghastly smile. "You overheard me, did you? Well, well, what said I? What said I?" Then, pausing, and noting that Walter did not reply, he stamped his foot violently, and grinding his teeth, repeated in a smothered tone: "Boy, what said I?"

"Mr. Aram," said Walter, "you forget yourself. I am not one to play the listener, more especially to the learned ravings of a man who can conceal nothing I care to know. Accident brought me hither."

"What! surely — surely I spoke aloud, did I not, — did I not?"

"You did; but so incoherently and indistinctly that I did not profit by your indiscretion. I cannot plagiarize, I assure you, from any scholastic designs you might have been giving vent to."

Aram looked on him for a moment, and then, breathing heavily, turned away.

"Pardon me," he said. "I am a poor, half-crazed man; much study has unnerved me, — I should never live but with my own thoughts. Forgive me, sir, I pray you."

Touched by the sudden contrition of Aram's manner, Walter forgot, not only his present displeasure, but his general dislike; he stretched forth his hand to the student, and hastened to assure him of his ready forgiveness. Aram sighed deeply as he pressed the young man's hand, and Walter saw, with surprise and emotion, that his eyes were filled with tears.

"Ah!" said Aram, gently shaking his head, "it is a hard life we bookmen lead! Not for us is the bright face of noonday or the smile of woman, the gay unbending of the heart, the neighing steed, and the shrill trump, — the pride, pomp, and circumstance of life. Our enjoyments are few and calm; our labor constant. But that is not the evil, sir, — the body avenges its own neglect. We grow old before our time; we wither up; the sap of youth shrinks from our veins; there is no bound in our step. We look about us with dimmed eyes, and our breath grows short and thick, and pains and coughs and shooting aches come upon us at night. It is a bitter life, — a bitter life, a joyless life; I would I had never commenced it. And yet the harsh world scowls upon us, — our nerves are broken, and they wonder why we are querulous; our blood curdles, and they ask why we are not gay; our brain grows dizzy and indistinct (as with me just now), and shrugging their shoulders, they whisper their neighbors that we are mad. I wish I had worked at the plough, and known sleep, and loved mirth — and — and not been what I am."

As the student uttered the last sentence he bowed his head, and a few tears stole silently down his cheek. Walter was

greatly affected,—it took him by surprise; nothing in Aram's ordinary demeanor betrayed any facility to emotion; and he conveyed to all the idea of a man, if not proud, at least cold.

"You do not suffer bodily pain, I trust?" asked Walter, soothingly.

"Pain does not conquer me," said Aram, slowly recovering himself. "I am not melted by that which I would fain despise. Young man, I wronged you,—you have forgiven me. Well, well, we will say no more on that head; it is past and pardoned. Your uncle has been kind to me, and I have not returned his advances: you shall tell him why. I have lived thirteen years by myself, and I have contracted strange ways and many humors not common to the world,—you have seen an example of this. Judge for yourself if I be fit for the smoothness and confidence and ease of social intercourse; I am not fit, I feel it! I am doomed to be alone; tell your uncle this,—tell him to suffer me to live so. I am grateful for his goodness, I know his motives; but I have a certain pride of mind: I cannot bear sufferance, I loathe indulgence. Nay, interrupt me not, I beseech you. Look round on Nature; behold the only company that humbles me not,—except the dead whose souls speak to us from the immortality of books. These herbs at your feet,—I know their secrets, I watch the mechanism of their life; the winds,—they have taught me their language; the stars,—I have unravelled their mysteries: and these,—the creatures and ministers of God,—these I offend not by my mood, to them I utter my thoughts and break forth into my dreams without reserve and without fear. But men disturb me,—I have nothing to learn from them, I have no wish to confide in them; they cripple the wild liberty which has become to me a second nature. What its shell is to the tortoise, solitude has become to me,—my protection; nay, my life!"

"But," said Walter, "with us at least you would not have to dread restraint: you might come when you would; be silent or converse, according to your will."

Aram smiled faintly, but made no immediate reply.

"So, you have been angling," he said, after a short pause,

and as if willing to change the thread of conversation. "Fie! it is a treacherous pursuit; it encourages man's worst propensities,—cruelty and deceit."

"I should have thought a lover of Nature would have been more indulgent to a pastime which introduces us to her most quiet retreats."

"And cannot Nature alone tempt you, without need of such allurements? What! that crisped and winding stream, with flowers on its very tide,—the water-violet and the water-lily, —these silent brakes, the cool of the gathering evening, the still and luxuriance of the universal life around you: are not these enough of themselves to tempt you forth? If not, go to, —your excuse is hypocrisy!"

"I am used to these scenes," replied Walter; "I am weary of the thoughts they produce in me, and long for any diversion or excitement."

"Ay, ay, young man! The mind is restless at your age: have a care! Perhaps you long to visit the world,—to quit these obscure haunts which you are fatigued in admiring?"

"It may be so," said Walter, with a slight sigh. "I should at least like to visit our great capital and note the contrast; I should come back, I imagine, with a greater zest to these scenes."

Aram laughed. "My friend," said he, "when men have once plunged in the great sea of human toil and passion, they soon wash away all love and zest for innocent enjoyments. What once was a soft retirement will become the most intolerable monotony; the gaming of social existence, the feverish and desperate chances of honor and wealth, upon which the men of cities set their hearts, render all pursuits less exciting utterly insipid and dull. The brook and the angle—ha! ha!—these are not occupations for men who have once battled with the world."

"I can forego them, then, without regret," said Walter, with the sanguineness of his years.

Aram looked upon him wistfully; the bright eye, the healthy cheek, and vigorous frame of the youth suited with his desire to seek the conflict of his kind, and gave a natural

grace to his ambition which was not without interest, even to the recluse.

"Poor boy!" said he, mournfully. "How gallantly the ship leaves the port,—how worn and battered it will return!"

When they parted, Walter returned slowly homewards, filled with pity for the singular man whom he had seen so strangely overpowered, and wondering how suddenly his mind had lost its former rancor to the student. Yet there mingled even with these kindly feelings a little displeasure at the superior tone which Aram had unconsciously adopted towards him, and to which, from any one, the high spirit of the young man was not readily willing to submit.

Meanwhile the student continued his path along the waterside; and as, with his gliding step and musing air, he roamed onward, it was impossible to imagine a form more suited to the deep tranquillity of the scene. Even the wild birds seemed to feel, by a sort of instinct, that in him there was no cause for fear, and did not stir from the turf that neighbored, or the spray that overhung his path.

"So," said he, soliloquizing, but not without casting frequent and jealous glances round him, and in a murmur so indistinct as would have been inaudible even to a listener, "so, I was not overheard. Well, I must cure myself of this habit; our thoughts, like nuns, ought not to go abroad without a veil. Ay, this tone will not betray me; I will preserve its tenor, for I can scarcely altogether renounce my sole confidant,—self; and thought seems more clear when uttered even thus. 'T is a fine youth, full of the impulse and daring of his years; *I* was never so young at heart. I was— Nay, what matters it? Who is answerable for his nature? Who can say, 'I controlled all the circumstances which made me what I am?' Madeline— Heavens! did I bring on myself this temptation? Have I not fenced it from me throughout all my youth, when my brain did at moments forsake me, and the veins did bound? And now, when the yellow hastens on the green of life,—now, for the first time, this emotion, this weakness— And for whom? One I have lived with, known, beneath whose eyes I have passed through all the fine gradations from

liking to love, from love to passion? No,—one whom I have seen but little; who, it is true, arrested my eye at the first glance it caught of her two years since, but to whom, till within the last few weeks, I have scarcely spoken! Her voice rings in my ear, her look dwells on my heart; when I sleep she is with me; when I wake I am haunted by her image. Strange, strange! Is love, then, after all, the sudden passion which in every age poetry has termed it, though till now my reason has disbelieved the notion?

"And now, what is the question,—to resist, or to yield? Her father invites me, courts me, and I stand aloof! Will this strength, this forbearance, last? Shall I *encourage* my mind to this decision?" Here Aram paused abruptly, and then renewed: "It is true! I ought to weave my lot with none. Memory sets me apart and alone in the world. It seems unnatural to me—a thought of dread—to bring another being to my solitude, to set an everlasting watch on my up-risings and my down-sittings; to invite eyes to my face when I sleep at nights, and ears to every word that may start unbidden from my lips. But if the watch be the watch of love— Away! does love endure forever? He who trusts to woman, trusts to the type of change. Affection may turn to hatred, fondness to loathing, anxiety to dread; and, at the best, woman is weak,—she is the minion to her impulses. Enough! I will steel my soul, shut up the avenues of sense, brand with the scathing-iron these yet green and soft emotions of lingering youth, and freeze and chain and curdle up feeling and heart and manhood into ice and age!"

CHAPTER VII.

THE POWER OF LOVE OVER THE RESOLUTION OF THE STUDENT. — ARAM BECOMES A FREQUENT GUEST AT THE MANOR-HOUSE. — A WALK. — CONVERSATION WITH DAME DARKMANS. — HER HISTORY. — POVERTY AND ITS EFFECTS.

Mad. Then, as Time won thee frequent to our hearth,
Didst thou not breathe, like dreams, into my soul
Nature's more gentle secrets, — the sweet lore
Of the green herb and the bee-worshipped flower?
And when deep Night did o'er the nether Earth
Diffuse meek quiet, and the Heart of Heaven
With love grew breathless, didst thou not unroll
The volume of the weird Chaldæan stars,
And of the winds, the clouds, the invisible air,
Make eloquent discourse, until, methought,
No human lip, but some diviner spirit
Alone, could preach such truths of things divine?
And so, and so —
Aram. From Heaven we turned to Earth,
And Wisdom fathered Passion.

. . . . . .

Aram. Wise men have praised the Peasant's thoughtless lot,
And learnèd Pride hath envied humble Toil.
If they were right, why let us burn our books,
And sit us down and play the fool with Time,
Mocking the prophet Wisdom's high decrees,
And walling this trite Present with dark clouds
Till Night becomes our Nature, and the ray
E'en of the stars but meteors that withdraw
The wandering spirit from the sluggish rest
Which makes its proper bliss. I will accost
This denizen of toil. — *From Eugene Aram, a MS. Tragedy.*

A wicked hag, and envy's self excelling
In mischiefe, for herself she only vext;
But this same, both herself and others eke perplext.

. . . . . .

Who then can strive with strong necessity,
That holds the world in his still changing state?
. . . . . .
Then do no further go, no further stray,
But here lie down, and to thy rest betake. — SPENSER.

FEW men, perhaps, could boast of so masculine and firm a mind as, despite his eccentricities, Aram assuredly possessed. His habits of solitude had strengthened its natural hardihood; for accustomed to make all the sources of happiness flow solely from himself, his thoughts the only companions, his genius the only vivifier, of his retreat,— the tone and faculty of his spirit could not but assume that austere and vigorous energy which the habit of self-dependence almost invariably produces; and yet the reader, if he be young, will scarcely feel surprised that the resolution of the student to battle against incipient love, from whatever reasons it might be formed, gradually and reluctantly melted away. It may be noted that the enthusiasts of learning and revery have, at one time or another in their lives, been, of all the tribes of men, the most keenly susceptible to love,— their solitude feeds their passion; and deprived, as they usually are, of the more hurried and vehement occupations of life, when love is once admitted to their hearts there is no counter-check to its emotions and no escape from its excitement. Aram, too, had just arrived at that age when a man usually feels a sort of revulsion in the current of his desires. At that age, those who have hitherto pursued love begin to grow alive to ambition; those who have been slaves to the pleasures of life awaken from the dream, and direct their desire to its interests. And in the same proportion, they who till then have wasted the prodigal fervors of youth upon a sterile soil, who have served Ambition, or, like Aram, devoted their hearts to Wisdom, relax from their ardor, look back on the departed years with regret, and commence, in their manhood, the fiery pleasures and delirious follies which are only pardonable in youth. In short, as in every human pursuit there is a certain vanity, and as every acquisition contains within itself the seed of disappointment, so there is a period of life when we pause from the pursuit and are

discontented with the acquisition. We then look around us for something new, again follow, and are again deceived. Few men throughout life are the servants to one desire. When we gain the middle of the bridge of our mortality, different objects from those which attracted us upward almost invariably lure us down the descent. Happy they who exhaust in the former part of the journey all the foibles of existence! But how different is the crude and evanescent love of that age when thought has not given intensity and power to the passions, from the love which is felt, *for the first time*, in maturer but still youthful years! As the flame burns the brighter in proportion to the resistance which it conquers, this later love is the more glowing in proportion to the length of time in which it has overcome temptation; all the solid and concentred faculties, ripened to their full height, are no longer capable of the infinite distractions, the numberless caprices, of youth; the rays of the heart, not rendered weak by diversion, collect into one burning focus;[1] the same earnestness and unity of purpose which render what we undertake in manhood so far more successful than what we would effect in youth, are equally visible and equally triumphant, whether directed to interest or to love. But then, as in Aram, the feelings must be fresh as well as matured; they must not have been frittered away by previous indulgence; the love must be the first produce of the soil, not the languid after-growth.

The reader will remark that the first time in which our narrative has brought Madeline and Aram together, was not the first time they had met; Aram had long noted with admiration a beauty which he had never seen paralleled, and certain vague and unsettled feelings had preluded the deep emotion that her image now excited within him. But the main cause of his present and growing attachment had been in the evident sentiment of kindness which he could not but feel Madeline bore towards him. So retiring a nature as his might never have harbored love if the love bore the character of presumption; but that one so beautiful beyond his dreams as

[1] Love is of the nature of a burning-glass, which, kept still in one place, fireth; changed often, it doth nothing. — *Letters by Sir John Suckling.*

Madeline Lester should deign to cherish for him a tenderness that might suffer him to hope, was a thought that, when he caught her eye unconsciously fixed upon him, and noted that her voice grew softer and more tremulous when she addressed him, forced itself upon his heart, and woke there a strange and irresistible emotion, which solitude and the brooding reflection that solitude produces — a reflection so much more intense in proportion to the paucity of living images it dwells upon — soon ripened into love. Perhaps, even, he would not have resisted the impulse as he now did, had not, at this time, certain thoughts connected with past events been more forcibly than of late years obtruded upon him, and thus in some measure divided his heart. By degrees, however, those thoughts receded from their vividness into the habitual deep, but not oblivious, shade beneath which his commanding mind had formerly driven them to repose; and as they thus receded, Madeline's image grew more undisturbedly present, and his resolution to avoid its power more fluctuating and feeble. Fate seemed bent upon bringing together these two persons, already so attracted towards each other. After the conversation recorded in our last chapter between Walter and the student, the former, touched and softened, as we have seen, in spite of himself, had cheerfully forborne (what before he had done reluctantly) the expressions of dislike which he had once lavished so profusely upon Aram; and Lester, who, forward as he had seemed, had nevertheless been hitherto a little checked in his advances to his neighbor by the hostility of his nephew, felt no scruple to deter him from urging them with a pertinacity that almost forbade refusal. It was Aram's constant habit, in all seasons, to wander abroad at certain times of the day, especially towards the evening; and if Lester failed to win entrance to his house, he was thus enabled to meet the student in his frequent rambles, and with a seeming freedom from design. Actuated by his great benevolence of character, Lester earnestly desired to win his solitary and unfriended neighbor from a mood and habit which he naturally imagined must engender a growing melancholy of mind; and since Walter had detailed to him the particulars of his

meeting with Aram, this desire had been considerably increased. There is not, perhaps, a stronger feeling in the world than pity, when united with admiration. When one man is resolved to know another, it is almost impossible to prevent it: we see daily the most remarkable instances of perseverance on one side conquering distaste on the other. By degrees, then, Aram relaxed from his insociability; he seemed to surrender himself to a kindness, the sincerity of which he was compelled to acknowledge. If he for a long time refused to accept the hospitality of his neighbor, he did not reject his society when they met; and this intercourse increased by little and little, until, ultimately, the recluse yielded to solicitation, and became the guest as well as companion. This, at first accident, grew, though not without many interruptions, into habit; and at length few evenings were passed by the inmates of the manor-house without the society of the student.

As his reserve wore off, his conversation mingled with its attractions a tender and affectionate tone. He seemed grateful for the pains which had been taken to allure him to a scene in which, at last, he acknowledged he found a happiness that he had never experienced before; and those who had hitherto admired him for his genius, admired him now yet more for his susceptibility to the affections.

There was not in Aram anything that savored of the harshness of pedantry or the petty vanities of dogmatism; his voice was soft and low, and his manner always remarkable for its singular gentleness and a certain dignified humility. His language did, indeed, at times, assume a tone of calm and patriarchal command; but it was only the command arising from an intimate persuasion of the truth of what he uttered. Moralizing upon our nature, or mourning over the delusions of the world, a grave and solemn strain breathed throughout his lofty words and the profound melancholy of his wisdom; but it touched, not offended,— elevated, not humbled,— the lesser intellect of his listeners: and even this air of unconscious superiority vanished when he was invited to teach or explain.

That task — which so few do gracefully that an accurate and shrewd thinker has said, "It is always safe to learn, even

from our enemies; seldom safe to instruct even our friends"[1] — Aram performed with a meekness and simplicity that charmed the vanity, even while it corrected the ignorance, of the applicant; and so various and minute was the information of this accomplished man that there scarcely existed any branch, even of that knowledge usually called practical, to which he could not impart from his stores something valuable and new. The agriculturist was astonished at the success of his suggestions, and the mechanic was indebted to him for the device which abridged his labor in improving its result.

It happened that the study of botany was not, at that day, so favorite and common a diversion with young ladies as it is now; and Ellinor, captivated by the notion of a science that gave a life and a history to the loveliest of earth's offspring, besought Aram to teach her its principles.

As Madeline, though she did not second the request, could scarcely absent herself from sharing the lesson, this pursuit brought the pair — already lovers — closer and closer together. It associated them, not only at home, but in their rambles throughout that enchanting country; and there is a mysterious influence in Nature which renders us, in her loveliest scenes, the most susceptible to love. Then, too, how often in their occupation their hands and eyes met; how often, by the shady wood or the soft water-side, they found themselves alone. In all times, how dangerous the connection, when of different sexes, between the scholar and the teacher! Under how many pretences, in that connection, the heart finds the opportunity to speak out!

Yet it was not with ease and complacency that Aram delivered himself to the intoxication of his deepening attachment. Sometimes he was studiously cold, or evidently wrestling with the powerful passion that mastered his reason. It was not without many throes and desperate resistance that love at length overwhelmed and subdued him; and these alternations of his mood, if they sometimes offended Madeline and sometimes wounded, still rather increased than lessened the spell which bound her to him. The doubt and the fear, the

[1] Lacon.

caprice and the change, which agitate the surface, swell also the tides, of passion. Woman, too, whose love is so much the creature of her imagination, always asks something of mystery and conjecture in the object of her affection. It is a luxury to her to perplex herself with a thousand apprehensions; and the more restlessly her lover occupies her mind, the more deeply he enthralls it.

Mingling with her pure and tender attachment to Aram a high and unswerving veneration, she saw, in his fitfulness and occasional abstraction and contradiction of manner, a confirmation of the modest sentiment that most weighed upon her fears, and imagined that at those times he thought her, as she deemed herself, unworthy of his love. And this was the only struggle which she conceived to pass between the affection he evidently bore her, and the feelings which had as yet restrained him from its open avowal.

One evening Lester and the two sisters were walking with the student along the valley that led to the house of the latter, when they saw an old woman engaged in collecting firewood among the bushes, and a little girl holding out her apron to receive the sticks with which the crone's skinny arms unsparingly filled it. The child trembled, and seemed half-crying; while the old woman, in a harsh, grating croak, was muttering forth mingled objurgation and complaint.

There was something in the appearance of the latter at once impressive and displeasing: a dark, withered, furrowed skin was drawn like parchment over harsh and aquiline features; the eyes, through the rheum of age, glittered forth black and malignant; and even her stooping posture did not conceal a height greatly above the common stature, though gaunt and shrivelled with years and poverty. It was a form and face that might have recalled at once the celebrated description of Otway, on a part of which we have already unconsciously encroached, and the remaining part of which we shall wholly borrow, —

> "On her crooked shoulders had she wrapped
> The tattered remnants of an old stript hanging
> That served to keep her carcass from the cold;

So there was nothing of a piece about her.
Her lower weeds were all o'er coarsely patched
With different-colored rags, — black, red, white, yellow, —
And seemed to speak variety of wretchedness."

"See," said Lester, "one of the eyesores of our village,—I might say the only discontented person."

"What! Dame Darkmans?" said Ellinor, quickly. "Ah! let us turn back. I hate to encounter that old woman; there is something so evil and savage in her manner of talk. And look, how she rates that poor girl whom she has dragged or decoyed to assist her!"

Aram looked curiously on the old hag. "Poverty," said he, "makes some humble, but more malignant; is it not want that grafts the devil on this poor woman's nature? Come, let us accost her,—I like conferring with distress."

"It is hard labor this?" said the student, gently.

The old woman looked up askant: the music of the voice that addresed her sounded harsh on her ear.

"Ay, ay!" she answered. "You fine gentlefolks can know what the poor suffer: ye talk and ye talk, but ye never assist."

"Say not so, dame," said Lester; "did I not send you but yesterday bread and money? And when did you ever look up at the Hall without obtaining relief?"

"But the bread was as dry as a stick," growled the hag; "and the money,—what was it? Will it last a week? Oh, yes! Ye think as much of your doits and mites as if ye stripped yourselves of a comfort to give it to us. Did ye have a dish less, a 'tato less, the day ye sent me—your charity I s'pose ye calls it? Och! fie! But the Bible's the poor cretur's comfort."

"I am glad to hear you say that, dame," said the good-natured Lester; "and I forgive everything else you have said, on account of that one sentence."

The old woman dropped the sticks she had just gathered, and glowered at the speaker's benevolent countenance with a malicious meaning in her dark eyes.

"An' ye do? Well. I 'm glad I please ye there. Och! yes!

the Bible 's a mighty comfort; for it says as much that the rich man shall not inter the kingdom of heaven! There 's a truth for you that makes the *poor* folks' heart chirp like a cricket, ho! ho! *I* sits by the imbers of a night, and I thinks and thinks as how I shall see you all burning; and ye 'll ask me for a drop o' water, and I shall laugh thin from my pleasant seat with the angels. Och! it 's a book for the poor that!"

The sisters shuddered. "And you think, then, that with envy, malice, and all uncharitableness at your heart, you are certain of heaven? For shame! Pluck the mote from your own eye!"

"What sinnifies praching? Did not the Blessed Saviour come for the poor? Them as has rags and dry bread here will be ixalted in the nixt world; an' if we poor folk have malice, as ye calls it, whose fault 's that? What do ye tache us? Eh? — Answer me that. Ye keeps all the larning an' all the other fine things to yoursel', and then ye scould and thritten and hang us 'cause we are not as wise as you. Och! there 's no jistice in the Lamb if heaven is not made for us; and the iverlasting hell, with its brimstone and fire, and its gnawing an' gnashing of teeth, an' its theirst, an' its torture, an' its worm that niver dies, for the like o' you."

"Come, come away!" said Ellinor, pulling her father's arm.

"And if," said Aram, pausing, "if I were to say to you, name your want, and it shall be fulfilled, would you have no charity for me also?"

"Umph!" returned the hag, "ye are the great scholard, and they say ye knows what no one else do. Till me now," and she approached, and familiarly laid her bony finger on the student's arm, "till me,— have ye iver, among other fine things, known poverty?"

"I have, woman!" said Aram, sternly.

"Och, ye have, thin! And did ye not sit and gloom and eat up your oun heart, an' curse the sun that looked so gay, an' the winged things that played so blithe-like, an' scowl at the rich folk that niver wasted a thought on ye? Till me now, your honor, till me!"

And the crone courtesied with a mock air of beseeching humility.

"I never forgot, even in want, the love due to my fellow-sufferers; for, woman, we all suffer,—the rich and the poor: there are worse pangs than those of want."

"Ye think there be, do ye? That's a comfort, umph! Well, I'll till ye now, I feel a rispict for you that I don't for the rest on 'em: for your face does not insult me with being cheary like theirs yonder; an' I have noted ye walk in the dusk with your eyes down and your arms crossed; an' I have said,—that man I do not hate, somehow, for he has something dark at his heart, like me!"

"The lot of earth is woe," answered Aram, calmly, yet shrinking back from the crone's touch; "judge we charitably, and act we kindly to each other. There, this money is not much, but it will light your hearth and heap your table without toil for some days at least."

"Thank your honor! An' what think you I'll do with the money?"

"What?"

"Drink, drink, drink!" cried the hag, fiercely. "There's nothing like drink for the poor, for thin we fancy ourselves what we wish. And," sinking her voice into a whisper, "I thinks thin that I have my foot on the billies of the rich folks, and my hands twisted about their intrails, and I hear them shriek, and—thin I am happy."

"Go home!" said Aram, turning away; "and open the Book of Life with other thoughts."

The little party proceeded; and looking back, Lester saw the old woman gaze after them, till a turn in the winding valley hid her from his sight.

"That is a strange person, Aram,—scarcely a favorable specimen of the happy English peasant," said Lester, smiling.

"Yet they say," added Madeline, "that she was not always the same perverse and hateful creature she is now."

"Ay," said Aram; "and what, then, is her history?"

"Why," replied Madeline, slightly blushing to find herself made the narrator of a story, "some forty years ago this

woman, so gaunt and hideous now, was the beauty of the village. She married an Irish soldier whose regiment passed through Grassdale, and was heard of no more till about ten years back, when she returned to her native place, the discontented, envious, altered being you now see her."

"She is not reserved in regard to her past life," said Lester. "She is too happy to seize the attention of any one to whom she can pour forth her dark and angry confidence. She saw her husband, who was afterwards dismissed the service,—a strong, powerful man, a giant of his tribe,—pine and waste, inch by inch, from mere physical want, and at last literally die from hunger. It happened that they had settled in the county in which her husband was born; and in that county those frequent famines which are the scourge of Ireland were for two years especially severe. You may note that the old woman has a strong vein of coarse eloquence at her command, perhaps acquired in (for it partakes of the natural character of) the country in which she lived so long; and it would literally thrill you with horror to hear her descriptions of the misery and destitution that she witnessed, and amidst which her husband breathed his last. Out of four children, not one survives. One, an infant, died within a week of the father; two sons were executed—one at the age of sixteen, one a year older—for robbery committed under aggravated circumstances; and a fourth, a daughter, died in the hospitals of London. The old woman became a wanderer and a vagrant, and was at length passed to her native parish, where she has since dwelt. These are the misfortunes which have turned her blood to gall, and these are the causes which fill her with so bitter a hatred against those whom wealth has preserved from sharing or witnessing a fate similar to hers."

"Oh!" said Aram, in a low but deep tone, "when, when will these hideous disparities be banished from the world? How many noble natures, how many glorious hopes, how much of the seraph's intellect, have been crushed into the mire or blasted into guilt by the mere force of physical want! What are the temptations of the rich to those of the poor? Yet see how lenient we are to the crimes of the one,—how relentless

to those of the other! It is a bad world; it makes a man's heart sick to look around him. The consciousness of how little individual genius can do to relieve the mass, grinds out, as with a stone, all that is generous in ambition, and to aspire from the level of life is but to be more graspingly selfish."

"Can legislators, or the moralists that instruct legislators, do so little, then, towards universal good?" said Lester, doubtingly.

"Why, what can they do but forward civilization? And what is civilization but an increase of human disparities? The more the luxury of the few, the more startling the wants and the more galling the sense of poverty. Even the dreams of the philanthropist only tend towards equality; and where is equality to be found but in the state of the savage? No; I thought otherwise once, but I now regard the vast lazar-house around us without hope of relief,—death is the sole physician!"

"Ah, no!" said the high-souled Madeline, eagerly; "do not take away from us the best feeling and the highest desire we can cherish. How poor, even in this beautiful world, with the warm sun and fresh air about us, would be life if we could not make the happiness of others!"

Aram looked at the beautiful speaker with a soft and half-mournful smile. There is one very peculiar pleasure that we feel as we grow older,—it is to see embodied, in another and a more lovely shape, the thoughts and sentiments we once nursed ourselves; it is as if we viewed before us the incarnation of our own youth; and it is no wonder that we are warmed towards the object that thus seems the living apparition of all that was brightest in ourselves. It was with this sentiment that Aram now gazed on Madeline. She felt the gaze, and her heart beat delightedly; but she sank at once into a silence which she did not break during the rest of their walk.

"I do not say," said Aram, after a pause, "that we are not able to make the happiness of those immediately around us. I speak only of what we can effect for the mass. And it is a deadening thought to mental ambition that the circle of happiness we can create is formed more by our moral than our

mental qualities. A warm heart, though accompanied but by a mediocre understanding, is even more likely to promote the happiness of those around, than are the absorbed and abstract, though kindly, powers of a more elevated genius. But [observing Lester about to interrupt him] let us turn from this topic, — let us turn from man's weakness to the glories of the Mother-Nature from which he sprang."

And kindling, as he ever did, the moment he approached a subject so dear to his studies, Aram now spoke of the stars which began to sparkle forth, — of the vast, illimitable career which recent science had opened to the imagination, and of the old, bewildering, yet eloquent theories which from age to age had at once misled and elevated the conjecture of past sages. All this was a theme to which his listeners loved to listen, and Madeline not the least. Youth, beauty, pomp, what are these, in point of attraction, to a woman's heart when compared to eloquence? The magic of the tongue is the most dangerous of all spells!

CHAPTER VIII.

THE PRIVILEGE OF GENIUS. — LESTER'S SATISFACTION AT THE ASPECT OF EVENTS. — HIS CONVERSATION WITH WALTER. — A DISCOVERY.

> *Alc.* I am for Lidian:
> This accident, no doubt, will draw him from his hermit's life!
>
> . . . . . .
>
> *Lis.* Spare my grief, and apprehend
> What I should speak.
>
> BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER: *The Lover's Progress.*

In the course of the various conversations our family of Grassdale enjoyed with their singular neighbor, it appeared that his knowledge had not been confined to the closet; at times he dropped remarks which showed that he had been much among cities, and travelled with the design, or at least

with the vigilance, of the observer. But he did not love to be drawn into any detailed accounts of what he had seen or whither he had been; an habitual, though a gentle, reserve kept watch over the past,—not, indeed, that character of reserve which excites the doubt, but which inspires the interest. His most gloomy moods were rather abrupt and fitful than morose, and his usual bearing was calm, soft, and even tender.

There is a certain charm about great superiority of intellect that winds into deep affections which a much more constant and even amiability of manners in lesser men often fails to reach. Genius makes many enemies, but it makes sure friends,—friends who forgive much, who endure long, who exact little: they partake of the character of disciples as well as friends. There lingers about the human heart a strong inclination to look upward,—to revere; in this inclination lies the source of religion, of loyalty, and also of the worship and immortality which are rendered so cheerfully to the great of old. And, in truth, it is a divine pleasure! Admiration seems in some measure to appropriate to ourselves the qualities it honors in others. We wed, we root ourselves to the natures we so love to contemplate, and their life grows a part of our own. Thus when a great man, who has engrossed our thoughts, our conjectures, our homage, dies, a gap seems suddenly left in the world; a wheel in the mechanism of our own being appears abruptly stilled; a portion of ourselves, and not our worst portion,—for how many pure, high, generous sentiments it contains,—dies with him! Yes, it is this love, so rare, so exalted, and so denied to all ordinary men, which is the especial privilege of greatness, whether that greatness be shown in wisdom, in enterprise, in virtue, or even, till the world learns better, in the more daring and lofty order of crime. A Socrates may claim it to-day,—a Napoleon to-morrow; nay, a brigand chief, illustrious in the circle in which he lives, may call it forth no less powerfully than the generous failings of a Byron or the sublime excellence of the greater Milton.

Lester saw with evident complacency the passion growing up between his friend and his daughter; he looked upon it as a

tie that would permanently reconcile Aram to the hearth of social and domestic life,—a tie that would constitute the happiness of his daughter, and secure to himself a relation in the man he felt most inclined, of all he knew, to honor and esteem. He remarked in the gentleness and calm temper of Aram much that was calculated to ensure domestic peace; and knowing the peculiar disposition of Madeline, he felt that she was exactly the person, not only to bear with the peculiarities of the student, but to venerate their source. In short, the more he contemplated the idea of this alliance, the more he was charmed with its probability.

Musing on this subject, the good squire was one day walking in his garden, when he perceived his nephew at some distance, and remarked that Walter, on seeing him, instead of coming forward to meet him, was about to turn down an alley in an opposite direction.

A little pained at this, and remembering that Walter had of late seemed estranged from himself and greatly altered from the high and cheerful spirits natural to his temper, Lester called to his nephew; and Walter, reluctantly and slowly changing his purpose of avoidance, advanced and met him.

"Why, Walter!" said the uncle, taking his arm, "this is somewhat unkind to shun me: are you engaged in any pursuit that requires secrecy or haste?"

"No, indeed, sir," said Walter, with some embarrassment; "but I thought you seemed wrapped in reflection, and would naturally dislike being disturbed."

"Hem! As to that, I have no reflections I wish concealed from you, Walter, or which might not be benefited by your advice." The youth pressed his uncle's hand, but made no reply; and Lester, after a pause, continued,—

"I am delighted to think, Walter, that you seem entirely to have overcome the unfavorable prepossession which at first you testified towards our excellent neighbor. And, for my part, I think he appears to be especially attracted towards yourself,—he seeks your company; and to me he always speaks of you in terms which, coming from such a quarter, give me the most lively gratification."

Walter bowed his head, but not in the delighted vanity with which a young man generally receives the assurance of another's praise.

"I own," renewed Lester, "that I consider our friendship with Aram one of the most fortunate occurrences in my life, —at least," added he with a sigh, "of late years. I doubt not but you must have observed the partiality with which our dear Madeline evidently regards him, and yet more the attachment to her which breaks forth from Aram, in spite of his habitual reserve and self-control. You have surely noted this, Walter?"

"I have," said Walter, in a low tone, and turning away his head.

"And doubtless you share my satisfaction. It happens fortunately now that Madeline early contracted that studious and thoughtful turn which, I must own, at one time gave me some uneasiness and vexation. It has taught her to appreciate the value of a mind like Aram's. Formerly, my dear boy, I hoped that at one time or another she and yourself might form a dearer connection than that of cousins. But I was disappointed, and I am now consoled. And indeed I think there is that in Ellinor which might be yet more calculated to render you happy,—that is, if the bias of your mind should ever lean that way."

"You are very good," said Walter, bitterly. "I own I am not flattered by your selection, nor do I see why the plainer and less brilliant of the two sisters must necessarily be the fitter for me."

"Nay," replied Lester, piqued, and justly angry, "I do not think, even if Madeline have the advantage of her sister, that you can find any fault with the personal or mental attractions of Ellinor. But, indeed, this is not a matter in which relations should interfere. I am far from any wish to prevent you from choosing throughout the world any one whom you may prefer. All I hope is that your future wife will be like Ellinor in kindness of heart and sweetness of temper."

"From choosing throughout the world!" repeated Walter. "And how in this nook am I to see the world?"

"Walter, your voice is reproachful! Do I deserve it?"

Walter was silent.

"I have of late observed," continued Lester, "and with wounded feelings, that you do not give me the same confidence or meet me with the same affection that you once delighted me by manifesting towards me. I know of no cause for this change. Do not let us, my son,—for I may so call you,—do not let us, as we grow older, grow also more apart. Time divides with a sufficient demarcation the young from the old: why deepen the necessary line? You know well that I have never from your childhood insisted heavily on a guardian's authority. I have always loved to contribute to your enjoyments, and shown you how devoted I am to your interests, by the very frankness with which I have consulted you on my own. If there be now on your mind any secret grievance or any secret wish, speak it. Walter, you are alone with the friend on earth who loves you best."

Walter was wholly overcome by this address; he pressed his good uncle's hand to his lips, and it was some moments before he mustered self-composure sufficient to reply.

"You have ever, ever been to me all that the kindest parent, the tenderest friend, could have been: believe me, I am not ungrateful. If of late I have been altered, the cause is not in you. Let me speak freely: you encourage me to do so. I am young, my temper is restless; I have a love of enterprise and adventure: is it not natural that I should long to see the world? This is the cause of my late abstraction of mind. I have now told you all: it is for you to decide."

Lester looked wistfully on his nephew's countenance before he replied.

"It is as I gathered," said he, "from various remarks which you have lately let fall. I cannot blame your wish to leave us,—it is certainly natural,—nor can I oppose it. Go, Walter, when you will."

The young man turned round with a lighted eye and flushed cheek.

"And why, Walter," said Lester, interrupting his thanks, "why this surprise, why this long doubt of my affection?

Could you believe I should refuse a wish that, at your age, I should have expressed myself? You have wronged me; you might have saved a world of pain to us both by acquainting me with your desire when it was first formed. But enough; I see Madeline and Aram approach,—let us join them now, and to-morrow we will arrange the time and method of your departure."

"Forgive me, sir," said Walter, stopping abruptly as the glow faded from his cheek, "I have not yet recovered myself; I am not fit for other society than yours. Excuse my joining my cousin and—"

"Walter!" said Lester, also stopping short, and looking full on his nephew, "a painful thought flashes upon me! Would to Heaven I may be wrong!—Have you ever felt for Madeline more tenderly than for her sister?"

Walter literally trembled as he stood. The tears rushed into Lester's eyes; he grasped his nephew's hand warmly,—

"God comfort thee, my poor boy!" said he, with great emotion; "I never dreamed of this."

Walter felt now that he was understood. He gratefully returned the pressure of his uncle's hand, and then, withdrawing his own, darted down one of the intersecting walks, and was almost instantly out of sight.

CHAPTER IX.

THE STATE OF WALTER'S MIND. — AN ANGLER AND A MAN OF THE WORLD. — A COMPANION FOUND FOR WALTER.

> This great disease for love I dre,[1]
> There is no tongue can tell the wo;
> I love the love that loves not me,
> I may not mend, but mourning mo.
>
> *The Mourning Maiden.*

> I in these flowery meads would be;
> These crystal streams should solace me,
> To whose harmonious bubbling voice
> I with my angle would rejoice. — Izaak Walton.

When Walter left his uncle he hurried, scarcely conscious of his steps, towards his favorite haunt by the water-side. From a child he had singled out that scene as the witness of his early sorrows or boyish schemes; and still the solitude of the place cherished the habits of his boyhood.

Long had he, unknown to himself, nourished an attachment to his beautiful cousin; nor did he awaken to the secret of his heart until, with an agonizing jealousy, he penetrated the secret at her own. The reader has doubtless already perceived that it was this jealousy which at the first occasioned Walter's dislike to Aram: the consolation of that dislike was forbidden him now. The gentleness and forbearance of the student's deportment had taken away all ground of offence; and Walter had sufficient generosity to acknowledge his merits, while tortured by their effect. Silently, till this day, he had gnawed his heart, and found for its despair no confidant and no comfort. The only wish that he cherished was a feverish and gloomy desire to leave the scene which witnessed the triumph of his rival. Everything around had become hateful to his eyes, and a curse had lighted upon the face of home. He

thought now, with a bitter satisfaction, that his escape was at hand; in a few days he might be rid of the gall and the pang which every moment of his stay at Grassdale inflicted upon him. The sweet voice of Madeline he should hear no more, subduing its silver sound for his rival's ear; no more he should watch apart, and himself unheeded, how timidly her glance roved in search of another, or how vividly her cheek flushed when the step of that happier one approached. Many miles would at least shut out this picture from his view; and in absence was it not possible that he might teach himself to forget? Thus meditating, he arrived at the banks of the little brooklet, and was awakened from his revery by the sound of his own name. He started, and saw the old corporal seated on the stump of a tree and busily employed in fixing to his line the mimic likeness of what anglers, and, for aught we know, the rest of the world, call the "violet-fly."

"Ha! master, at my day's work, you see, — fit for nothing else now. When a musket's half worn out, schoolboys buy it,— pop it at sparrows. I be like the musket! But never mind; I have not seen the world for nothing. We get reconciled to all things; that's my way — augh! Now, sir, you shall watch me catch the finest trout you have seen this summer; know where he lies,— under the bush yonder. Whi-sh! sir, whi-sh!"

The corporal now gave his warrior soul up to the due guidance of the violet-fly. Now he whipped it lightly on the wave; now he slid it coquettishly along the surface; now it floated, like an unconscious beauty, carelessly with the tide; and now, like an artful prude, it affected to loiter by the way, or to steal into designing obscurity under the shade of some overhanging bank. But none of these manœuvres captivated the wary old trout on whose acquisition the corporal had set his heart; and, what was especially provoking, the angler could see distinctly the dark outline of the intended victim as it lay at the bottom,— like some well-regulated bachelor who eyes from afar the charms he has discreetly resolved to neglect.

The corporal waited till he could no longer blind himself

to the displeasing fact that the violet-fly was wholly inefficacious; he then drew up his line, and replaced the contemned beauty of the violet-fly with the novel attractions of the yellow-dun.

"Now, sir," whispered he, lifting up his finger and nodding sagaciously to Walter. Softly dropped the yellow-dun on the water, and swiftly did it glide before the gaze of the latent trout. And now the trout seemed aroused from his apathy; behold, he moved forward, balancing himself upon his fins; now he slowly ascended towards the surface: you might see all the speckles of his coat. The corporal's heart stood still, — he is now at a convenient distance from the yellow-dun; lo, he surveys it steadfastly; he ponders, he see-saws himself to and fro. The yellow-dun sails away in affected indifference: that indifference whets the appetite of the hesitating gazer; he darts forward, he is opposite the yellow-dun, he pushes his nose against it with an eager rudeness, he — No, he does *not* bite, he recoils, he gazes again with surprise and suspicion on the little charmer; he fades back slowly into the deeper water, and then, suddenly turning his tail towards the disappointed bait, he makes off as fast as he can, — yonder, yonder, — and disappears! No, that 's he leaping yonder from the wave. Jupiter, what a noble fellow! What leaps he at? A real fly! "D — n his eyes!" growled the corporal.

"You might have caught him with a minnow," said Walter, speaking for the first time.

"Minnow!" repeated the corporal, gruffly; "ask your honor's pardon. Minnow! — I have fished with the yellow-dun these twenty years, and never knew it fail before. Minnow! — baugh! But ask pardon; your honor is very welcome to fish with a minnow, if you please it."

"Thank you, Bunting. And pray what sport have you had to-day?"

"Oh! good, good," quoth the corporal, snatching up his basket and closing the cover, lest the young squire should pry into it. No man is more tenacious of his secrets than your true angler. "Sent the best home two hours ago, — one weighed three pounds, on the faith of a man. Indeed, I 'm

satisfied now; time to give up;" and the corporal began to disjoint his rod.

"Ah, sir!" said he, with a half sigh, "a pretty river this, — don't mean to say it is not; but the river Lea for my money. You know the Lea? Not a morning's walk from Lunnon. Mary Gibson, my first sweetheart, lived by the bridge (caught such a trout there by the by!); had beautiful eyes, — black, round as a cherry; five feet eight without shoes; might have 'listed in the Forty-second."

"Who, Bunting," said Walter, smiling, — "the lady, or the trout?"

"Augh! baugh! what? Oh, laughing at me, your honor! you're welcome, sir. Love's a silly thing, — know the world now; have not fallen in love these ten years. I doubt — no offence, sir, no offence — I doubt whether your honor and Miss Ellinor can say as much."

"I and Miss Ellinor! You forget yourself strangely, Bunting," said Walter, coloring with anger.

"Beg pardon, sir, beg pardon, — rough soldier; lived away from the world so long, words slipped out of my mouth, — absent without leave."

"But why," said Walter, smothering or conquering his vexation, — "why couple me with Miss Ellinor? Did you imagine that we — we were in love with each other?"

"Indeed, sir, and if I did, 't is no more than my neighbors imagine too."

"Humph! Your neighbors are very silly, then, and very wrong."

"Beg pardon, sir, again, — always getting askew. Indeed, some did say it was Miss Madeline; but I says, says I, 'No! I'm a man of the world, — see through a millstone: Miss Madeline's too easy like; Miss Nelly blushes when he speaks.' Scarlet is Love's regimentals, — it was ours in the Forty-second, edged with yellow; pepper-and-salt pantaloons! For my part I think — But I've no business to think, howsomever — baugh!"

"Pray what do you think, Mr. Bunting? Why do you hesitate?"

"'Fraid of offence. But I do think that Master Aram — your honor understands — Howsomever, squire's daughter too great a match for such as he!"

Walter did not answer; and the garrulous old soldier, who had been the young man's playmate and companion since Walter was a boy, and was therefore accustomed to the familiarity with which he now spoke, continued, mingling with his abrupt prolixity an occasional shrewdness of observation which showed that he was no inattentive commentator on the little and quiet world around him, —

"Free to confess, Squire Walter, that I don't quite like this larned man as much as the rest of 'em; something queer about him; can't see to the bottom of him; don't think he's quite so meek and lamblike as he seems. Once saw a calm dead pool in foreign parts; peered down into it; by little and little my eye got used to it; saw something dark at the bottom; stared and stared — by Jupiter! a great big alligator! Walked off immediately; never liked quiet pools since — augh, no!"

"An argument against quiet pools, perhaps, Bunting, but scarcely against quiet people."

"Don't know as to that, your honor, — much of a muchness. I have seen Master Aram, demure as he looks, start, and bite his lip, and change color, and frown, — he has an ugly frown, I can tell ye, — when he thought no one nigh. A man who gets in a passion with himself may be soon out of temper with others. Free to confess, I should not like to see him married to that stately, beautiful young lady; but they do gossip about it in the village. If it is not true, better put the squire on his guard, — false rumors often beget truths. Beg pardon, your honor, no business of mine — baugh! But I 'm a lone man who have seen the world, and I thinks on the things around me, and I turns over the quid, now on this side, now on the other, — 't is my way, sir, — and — But I offend your honor."

"Not at all, — I know you are an honest man, Bunting, and well affected to our family; at the same time, it is neither prudent nor charitable to speak harshly of our neighbors without sufficient cause. And really you seem to me to be a little

hasty in your judgment of a man so inoffensive in his habits and so justly and generally esteemed as Mr. Aram."

"May be, sir, may be; very right what you say. But I thinks what I thinks all the same; and, indeed, it is a thing that puzzles me how that strange-looking vagabond as frighted the ladies so, and who, Miss Nelly told me, — for she saw them in his pocket, — carried pistols about him, as if he had been among cannibals and Hottentots, instead of the peaceablest county that man ever set foot in, should boast of his friendship with this larned scholard, and pass I dare swear a whole night in his house! Birds of a feather flock together — augh! — sir!"

"A man cannot surely be answerable for the respectability of all his acquaintances, even though he feel obliged to offer them the accommodation of a night's shelter."

"Baugh!" grunted the corporal. "Seen the world, sir, seen the world, — young gentlemen are always so good-natured; 't is a pity that the more one sees the more suspicious one grows. One does not have gumption till one has been properly cheated; one must be made a fool very often in order not to be fooled at last!"

"Well, corporal, I shall now have opportunities enough of profiting by experience. I am going to leave Grassdale in a few days, and learn suspicion and wisdom in the great world."

"Augh! baugh! what!" cried the corporal, starting from the contemplative air which he had hitherto assumed, "the great world? How? when? going away? Who goes with your honor?"

"My honor's self; I have no companion, unless you like to attend me," said Walter, jestingly; but the corporal affected, with his natural shrewdness, to take the proposition in earnest.

"I! Your honor's too good; and indeed, though I say it, sir, you might do worse. Not but what I should be sorry to leave nice snug home here, and this stream, though the trout have been shy lately, — ah! that was a mistake of yours, sir. recommending the minnow, — and neighbor Dealtry, though his ale 's not so good as 't was last year; and — and —

But, in short, I always loved your honor,—dandled you on my knees; you recollect the broadsword exercise?—one, two, three—augh! baugh! And if your honor really is going, why, rather than you should want a proper person, who knows the world, to brush your coat, polish your shoes, give you good advice,—on the faith of a man, I 'll go with you myself!"

This alacrity on the part of the corporal was far from displeasing to Walter. The proposal he had at first made unthinkingly, he now seriously thought advisable; and at length it was settled that the corporal should call the next morning at the manor-house, and receive instructions to conclude arrangements for the journey, not forgetting, as the sagacious Bunting delicately insinuated, "the wee settlements as to wages and board-wages,—more a matter of form, like, than anything else, augh!"

CHAPTER X.

THE LOVERS.—THE ENCOUNTER AND QUARREL OF THE RIVALS.

> Two such I saw, what time the labored ox
> In his loose traces from the furrow came. — *Comus.*

> *Pedro.* Now do me noble right.
> *Rod.* I 'll satisfy you,
> But not by the sword.
>
> BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER: *The Pilgrim.*

WHILE Walter and the corporal enjoyed the above conversation, Madeline and Aram, whom Lester left to themselves, were pursuing their walk along the solitary fields. *Their* love had passed from the eye to the lip, and now found expression in words.

"Observe," said he, as the light touch of one who he felt loved him entirely, rested on his arm, —"observe, as the later summer now begins to breathe a more various and mellow glory into the landscape, how singularly pure and lucid the atmosphere becomes. When, two months ago, in the full flush

of June, I walked through these fields, a gray mist hid yon distant hills and the far forest from my view. Now, with what a transparent stillness the whole expanse of scenery spreads itself before us! And such, Madeline, is the change that has come over myself since that time. Then if I looked beyond the limited present, all was dim and indistinct. Now the mist has faded away, the broad future extends before me calm and bright with the hope which is borrowed from your love!"

We will not tax the patience of the reader, who seldom enters with keen interest into the mere dialogue of love, with the blushing Madeline's reply, or with all the soft vows and tender confessions which the rich poetry of Aram's mind made yet more delicious to the ear of his dreaming and devoted mistress.

"There is one circumstance," said Aram, "which casts a momentary shade on the happiness I enjoy: my Madeline probably guesses its nature. I regret to see that the blessing of your love must be purchased by the misery of another, and that other the nephew of my kind friend. You have doubtless observed the melancholy of Walter Lester, and have long since known its origin."

"Indeed, Eugene," answered Madeline, "it has given me great pain to note what you refer to, for it would be a false delicacy in me to deny that I have observed it. But Walter is young and high-spirited; nor do I think he is of a nature to love long where there is no return."

"And what," said Aram, sorrowfully,—"what deduction from reason can ever apply to love? Love is a very contradiction of all the elements of our ordinary nature: it makes the proud man meek, the cheerful, sad, the high-spirited, tame; our strongest resolutions, our hardiest energy, fail before it. Believe me, you cannot prophesy of its future effect in a man from any knowledge of his past character. I grieve to think that the blow falls upon one in early youth, ere the world's disappointments have blunted the heart, or the world's numerous interests have multiplied its resources. Men's minds have been turned when they have not well sifted the

cause themselves, and their fortunes marred, by one stroke on the affections of their youth. So at least have I read, Madeline, and so marked in others. For myself, I knew nothing of love in its reality till I knew you. But who can know you, and not sympathize with him who has lost you?"

"Ah, Eugene! you at least overrate the influence which love produces on men. A little resentment and a little absence will soon cure my cousin of an ill-placed and ill-requited attachment. You do not think how easy it is to forget."

"Forget!" said Aram, stopping abruptly; "ay, forget,—it is a strange truth! we *do* forget! The summer passes over the furrow, and the corn springs up; the sod forgets the flower of the past year; the battle-field forgets the blood that has been spilt upon its turf; the sky forgets the storm; and the water the noon-day sun that slept upon its bosom. All Nature preaches forgetfulness. Its very order is the progress of oblivion. And I—I—give me your hand, Madeline,—I, ha! ha! I forget too!"

As Aram spoke thus wildly, his countenance worked; but his voice was slow and scarcely audible,—he seemed rather conferring with himself than addressing Madeline. But when his words ceased, and he felt the soft hand of his betrothed, and, turning, saw her anxious and wistful eyes fixed in alarm, yet in all unsuspecting confidence, on his face, his features relaxed into their usual serenity, and kissing the hand he clasped, he continued, in a collected and steady tone,—

"Forgive me, my sweetest Madeline. These fitful and strange moods sometimes come upon me yet. I have been so long in the habit of pursuing any train of thought, however wild, that presents itself to my mind that I cannot easily break it, even in your presence. All studious men—the twilight eremites of books and closets—contract this ungraceful custom of soliloquy. You know our abstraction is a common jest and proverb: you must laugh me out of it. But stay, dearest,—there is a rare herb at your feet; let me gather it. So, do you note its leaves, this bending and silver flower? Let us rest on this bank, and I will tell you of its qualities. Beautiful as it is, it has a poison."

Aram and Madeline in "The Lady's Seat."

The place in which the lovers rested is one which the villagers to this day call "The Lady's Seat;" for Madeline, whose history is fondly preserved in that district, was afterwards wont constantly to repair to that bank (during a short absence of her lover, hereafter to be noted), and subsequent events stamped with interest every spot she was known to have favored with resort. And when the flower had been duly conned, and the study dismissed, Aram, to whom all the signs of the seasons were familiar, pointed to her the thousand symptoms of the month which are unheeded by less observant eyes,—not forgetting, as they thus reclined, their hands clasped together, to couple each remark with some allusion to his love, or some deduction which heightened compliment into poetry. He bade her mark the light gossamer as it floated on the air: now soaring high, high into the translucent atmosphere; now suddenly stooping, and sailing away beneath the boughs, which ever and anon it hung with a silken web that by the next morn would glitter with a thousand dewdrops. "And so," said he, fancifully, "does Love lead forth its numberless creations, making the air its path and empire, —ascending aloft at its wild will, hanging its meshes on every bough, and bidding the common grass break into a fairy lustre at the beam of the daily sun!"

He pointed to her the spot where, in the silent brake, the harebells, now waxing rare and few, yet lingered, or where the mystic ring on the soft turf conjured up the associations of Oberon and his train. That superstition gave license and play to his full memory and glowing fancy; and Shakspeare, Spenser, Ariosto, the magic of each mighty master of Fairy Realm, he evoked, and poured into her transported ear. It was precisely such arts, which to a gayer and more worldly nature than Madeline's might have seemed but wearisome, that arrested and won her imaginative and high-wrought mind. And thus he, who to another might have proved but the retired and moody student, became to her the very being of whom her "maiden meditation" had dreamed,—the master and magician of her fate.

Aram did not return to the house with Madeline; he accom-

panied her to the garden-gate, and then, taking leave of her, bent his way homeward. He had gained the entrance of the little valley that led to his abode, when he saw Walter cross his path at a short distance. His heart, naturally susceptible to kindly emotion, smote him as he remarked the moody listlessness of the young man's step, and recalled the buoyant lightness it was once wont habitually to wear. He quickened his pace, and joined Walter before the latter was aware of his presence.

"Good evening," said he mildly; "if you are going my way, give me the benefit of your company."

"My path lies yonder," replied Walter, somewhat sullenly; "I regret that it is different from yours."

"In that case," said Aram, "I can delay my return home, and will, with your leave, intrude my society upon you for some few minutes."

Walter bowed his head in reluctant assent. They walked on for some moments without speaking, the one unwilling, the other seeking an occasion, to break the silence.

"This, to my mind," said Aram, at length, "is the most pleasing landscape in the whole country: observe the bashful water stealing away among the woodlands. Methinks the wave is endowed with an instinctive wisdom that it thus shuns the world."

"Rather," said Walter, "with the love for change which exists everywhere in Nature, it does not seek the shade until it has passed by 'towered cities' and 'the busy hum of men.'"

"I admire the shrewdness of your reply," rejoined Aram; "but note how far more pure and lovely are its waters in these retreats, than when washing the walls of the reeking town, receiving into its breast the taint of a thousand pollutions, vexed by the sound and stench and unholy perturbation of men's dwelling-place. Now it glasses only what is high or beautiful in Nature,— the stars or the leafy banks. The wind that ruffles it is clothed with perfumes; the rivulet that swells it descends from the everlasting mountains, or is formed by the rains of heaven. Believe me, it is the type of a life that

glides into solitude from the weariness and fretful turmoil of the world.

> "'No flattery, hate, or envy lodgeth there;
> There no suspicion walled in provèd steel,
> Yet fearful of the arms herself doth wear;
> Pride is not there; no tyrant there we feel!'"[1]

"I will not cope with you in simile or in poetry," said Walter, as his lip curved; "it is enough for me to think that life should be spent in action. I hasten to prove if my judgment be erroneous."

"Are you, then, about to leave us?" inquired Aram.

"Yes, within a few days."

"Indeed! I regret to hear it."

The answer sounded jarringly on the irritated nerves of the disappointed rival.

"You do me more honor than I desire," said he, "in interesting yourself, however lightly, in my schemes or fortune."

"Young man," replied Aram, coldly, "I never see the impetuous and yearning spirit of youth without a certain, and, it may be, a painful interest. How feeble is the chance that its hopes will be fulfilled! Enough if it lose not all its loftier aspirings as well as its brighter expectations."

Nothing more aroused the proud and fiery temper of Walter Lester than the tone of superior wisdom and superior age which his rival sometimes assumed towards him. More and more displeased with his present companion, he answered, in no conciliatory tone, "I cannot but consider the warning and the fears of one, neither my relation nor my friend, in the light of a gratuitous affront."

Aram smiled as he answered,—

"There is no occasion for resentment. Preserve this hot spirit and this high self-confidence till you return again to these scenes, and I shall be at once satisfied and corrected."

"Sir," said Walter, coloring, and irritated more by the smile than the words of his rival, "I am not aware by what right or on what ground you assume towards me the superi-

[1] Phineas Fletcher.

ority, not only of admonition, but reproof! My uncle's preference towards you gives you no authority over me. That preference I do not pretend to share." He paused for a moment, thinking Aram might hasten to reply; but as the student walked on with his usual calmness of demeanor, he added, stung by the indifference, which he attributed, not altogether without truth, to disdain,—"And since you have taken upon yourself to caution me and to forebode my inability to resist the contamination, as you would term it, of the world, I tell you that it may be happy for you to bear so clear a conscience, so untouched a spirit, as that which I now boast, and with which I trust in God and my own soul I shall return to my birthplace. It is not the holy only that love solitude; and men may shun the world from another motive than that of philosophy."

It was now Aram's turn to feel resentment; and this was indeed an insinuation not only unwarrantable in itself, but one which a man of so peaceable and guileless a life, affecting even an extreme and rigid austerity of morals, might well be tempted to repel with scorn and indignation,—and Aram, however meek and forbearing in general, testified in this instance that his wonted gentleness arose from no lack of man's natural spirit. He laid his hand commandingly on young Lester's shoulder, and surveyed his countenance with a dark and menacing frown.

"Boy!" said he, "were there meaning in your words, I should (mark me!) avenge the insult; as it is, I despise it. Go!"

So high and lofty was Aram's manner, so majestic was the sternness of his rebuke and the dignity of his bearing, as, waving his hand, he now turned away, that Walter lost his self-possession and stood fixed to the spot, abashed, and humbled from his late anger. It was not till Aram had moved with a slow step several paces backward towards his home that the bold and haughty temper of the young man returned to his aid. Ashamed of himself for the momentary weakness he had betrayed, and burning to redeem it, he hastened after the stately form of his rival, and, planting him-

self full in his path, said, in a voice half-choked with contending emotions,—

"Hold! You have given me the opportunity I have long desired; you yourself have now broken that peace which existed between us, and which to me was more bitter than wormwood. You have dared — yes, dared — to use threatening language towards me! I call on you to fulfil your threat. I tell you that I meant, I desired, I thirsted, to affront you. Now resent my purposed, premeditated affront as you will and can."

There was something remarkable in the contrasted figures of the rivals as they now stood fronting each other. The elastic and vigorous form of Walter Lester, his sparkling eyes, his sunburnt and glowing cheek, his clenched hands, and his whole frame alive and eloquent with the energy, the heat, the hasty courage, and fiery spirit of youth; on the other hand, the bending frame of the student gradually rising into the dignity of its full height, his pale cheek in which the wan hues neither deepened nor waned, his large eye raised to meet Walter's, bright, steady, and yet how calm! Nothing weak, nothing irresolute, could be traced in that form or that lofty countenance; yet all resentment had vanished from his aspect. He seemed at once tranquil and prepared.

"You designed to affront me!" said he: "it is well, it is a noble confession; and wherefore? What do you propose to gain by it? A man whose whole life is peace you would provoke to outrage. Would there be triumph in this, or disgrace? A man whom your uncle honors and loves, you would insult without cause, you would waylay, you would, after watching and creating your opportunity, entrap into defending himself! Is this worthy of that high spirit of which you boasted? Is this worthy a generous anger or a noble hatred? Away! you malign yourself. I shrink from no quarrel,— why should I? I have nothing to fear: my nerves are firm; my heart is faithful to my will; my habits may have diminished my strength, but it is yet equal to that of most men. As to the weapons of the world, they fall not to my use. I might be excused by the most punctilious for rejecting what

becomes neither my station nor my habits of life; but I learned thus much from books long since: 'Hold thyself prepared for all things.' I am so prepared. And as I command the spirit, I lack not the skill, to defend myself or return the hostility of another." As Aram thus said, he drew a pistol from his bosom and pointed it leisurely towards a tree at the distance of some paces.

"Look," said he: "you note that small discolored and white stain in the bark,—you can but just observe it; he who can send a bullet through that spot need not fear to meet the quarrel which he seeks to avoid."

Walter turned mechanically, and indignant, though silent, towards the tree. Aram fired, and the ball penetrated the centre of the stain. He then replaced the pistol in his bosom and said,—

"Early in life I had many enemies, and I taught myself these arts. From habit, I still bear about me the weapons I trust and pray I may never have occasion to use. But to return. I have offended you; I have incurred your hatred,—why? What are my sins?"

"Do you ask the cause?" said Walter, speaking between his ground teeth. "Have you not traversed my views, blighted my hopes, charmed away from me the affections which were more to me than the world, and driven me to wander from my home with a crushed spirit and a cheerless heart? Are these no causes for hate?"

"Have I done this?" said Aram, recoiling, and evidently and powerfully affected. "Have I so injured you? It is true! I know it, I perceive it, I read your heart; and—bear witness, Heaven!—I feel for the wound that I, but with no guilty hand, inflict upon you. Yet be just; ask yourself, have I done aught that you, in my case, would have left undone? Have I been insolent in triumph, or haughty in success? If so, hate me, nay, spurn me, now."

Walter turned his head irresolutely away.

"If it please you that I accuse myself in that I, a man seared and lone at heart, presumed to come within the pale of human affections; that I exposed myself to cross another's

better and brighter hopes, or dared to soften my fate with the tender and endearing ties that are meet alone for a more genial and youthful nature; if it please you that I accuse and curse myself for this, that I yielded to it with pain and with self-reproach, that I shall think hereafter of what I unconsciously cost you, with remorse,—then be consoled!"

"It is enough," said Walter; "let us part. I leave you with more soreness at my late haste than I will acknowledge, —let that content you; for myself, I ask for no apology or—"

"But you shall have it amply," interrupted Aram, advancing with a cordial openness of mien not usual to him. "I was all to blame; I should have remembered you were an injured man, and suffered you to have said all you would. Words at best are but a poor vent for a wronged and burning heart. It shall be so in future; speak your will, attack, upbraid, taunt me, I will bear it all. And, indeed, even to myself there appears some withcraft, some glamory, in what has chanced. What! I favored where you love? Is it possible? It might teach the vainest to forswear vanity. You the young, the buoyant, the fresh, the beautiful? And I, who have passed the glory and zest of life between dusty walls,—I who— Well, well, Fate laughs at probabilities!"

Aram now seemed relapsing into one of his more abstracted moods; he ceased to speak aloud, but his lips moved, and his eyes grew fixed in revery on the ground. Walter gazed at him for some moments with mixed and contending sensations. Once more, resentment and the bitter wrath of jealousy had faded back into the remoter depths of his mind, and a certain interest for his singular rival, despite of himself, crept into his breast. But this mysterious and fitful nature, was it one in which the devoted Madeline would certainly find happiness and repose,—would she never regret her choice? This question obtruded itself upon him, and while he sought to answer it, Aram, regaining his composure, turned abruptly and offered him his hand. Walter did not accept it; he bowed with a cold aspect. "I cannot give my hand without my heart," said he; "we were foes just now: we are not friends yet. I am unreasonable in this, I know, but—"

"Be it so," interrupted Aram; "I understand you. I press my good-will on you no more. When this pang is forgotten, when this wound is healed, and when you will have learned more of him who is now your rival, we may meet again, with other feelings on your side."

Thus they parted; and the solitary lamp, which for weeks past had been quenched at the wholesome hour in the student's home, streamed from the casement throughout the whole of that night: was it a witness of the calm and learned vigil, or of the unresting heart?

CHAPTER XI.

THE FAMILY SUPPER.—THE TWO SISTERS IN THEIR CHAMBER.—A MISUNDERSTANDING FOLLOWED BY A CONFESSION.—WALTER'S APPROACHING DEPARTURE, AND THE CORPORAL'S BEHAVIOR THEREON.—THE CORPORAL'S FAVORITE INTRODUCED TO THE READER.—THE CORPORAL PROVES HIMSELF A SUBTLE DIPLOMATIST.

So we grew together
Like to a double cherry, seeming parted,
But yet an union in partition.
A Midsummer Night's Dream.

The corporal had not taken his measures so badly in this stroke of artilleryship.—*Tristram Shandy.*

It was late that evening when Walter returned home; the little family were assembled at the last and lightest meal of the day. Ellinor silently made room for her cousin beside herself, and that little kindness touched Walter. "Why did I not love *her?*" thought he; and he spoke to her in a tone so affectionate that it made her heart thrill with delight. Lester was, on the whole, the most pensive of the group; but the old and young man exchanged looks of restored confidence,

which on the part of the former were softened by a pitying tenderness.

When the cloth was removed, and the servants gone, Lester took it on himself to break to the sisters the intended departure of their cousin. Madeline received the news with painful blushes and a certain self-reproach; for even where a woman has no cause to blame herself, she in these cases feels a sort of remorse at the unhappiness she occasions. But Ellinor rose suddenly and left the room.

"And now," said Lester, "London will, I suppose, be your first destination. I can furnish you with letters to some of my old friends there,—merry fellows they were once; you must take care of the prodigality of their wine. There 's John Courtland,—ah! a seductive dog to drink with. Be sure and let me know how honest John looks, and what he says of me. I recollect him as if it were yesterday: a roguish eye with a moisture in it, full cheeks, a straight nose, black curled hair, and teeth as even as dies,—honest John showed his teeth pretty often, too. Ha, ha! how the dog loved a laugh! Well, and Peter Hales,—*Sir* Peter now; has his uncle's baronetcy,—a generous, open-hearted fellow as ever lived, will ask you very often to dinner—nay, offer you money if you want it. But take care he does not lead you into extravagances: out of debt, out of danger, Walter. It would have been well for poor Peter Hales had he remembered that maxim; often and often have I been to see him in the Marshalsea. But he was the heir to good fortunes, though his relations kept him close; so I suppose he is well off now. His estates lie in ——shire, on your road to London; so if he is at his country-seat you can beat up his quarters and spend a month or so with him: a most hospitable fellow."

With these little sketches of his contemporaries the good squire endeavored to while the time, taking, it is true, some pleasure in the youthful reminiscences they excited, but chiefly designing to enliven the melancholy of his nephew. When, however, Madeline had retired, and they were alone, he drew his chair closer to Walter's, and changed the conversation into a more serious and anxious strain. The guardian

and the ward sat up late that night; and when Walter retired to rest it was with a heart more touched by his uncle's kindness than his own sorrows.

But we are not about to close the day without a glance at the chamber which the two sisters held in common. The night was serene and starlit; and Madeline sat by the open window, leaning her face upon her hand and gazing on the lone house of her lover, which might be seen afar across the landscape, the trees sleeping around it, and one pale and steady light gleaming from its lofty casement like a star.

"He has broken faith," said Madeline; "I shall chide him for this to-morrow. He promised me the light should be ever quenched before this hour."

"Nay," said Ellinor, in a tone somewhat sharpened from its native sweetness, and who now sat up in the bed, the curtain of which was half-drawn aside, and the soft light of the skies rested full upon her rounded neck and youthful countenance, — "nay, Madeline, do not loiter there any longer; the air grows sharp and cold, and the clock struck one several minutes since. Come, sister, come!"

"I cannot sleep," replied Madeline, sighing, "and think that yon light streams upon those studies which steal the healthful hues from his cheek and the very life from his heart."

"You are infatuated, you are bewitched by that man," said Ellinor, peevishly.

"And have I not cause, ample cause?" returned Madeline, with all a girl's beautiful enthusiasm, as the color mantled her cheek and gave it the only additional loveliness it could receive. "When he speaks, is it not like music? — or, rather, what music so arrests and touches the heart? Methinks it is heaven only to gaze upon him, to note the changes of that majestic countenance, to set down as food for memory every look and every movement. But when the look turns to me; when the voice utters my name, ah! Ellinor, *then* it is not a wonder that I love him thus much, but that any others should think they have known love, and yet not loved *him!* And, indeed, I feel assured that what the world calls love is not

my love. Are there more Eugenes in the world than one? Who but Eugene *could* be loved as I love?"

"What! are there none as worthy?" said Ellinor, half smiling.

"Can you ask it?" answered Madeline, with a simple wonder in her voice. "Whom would you compare — compare! nay, place within a hundred grades of the height which Eugene Aram holds in this little world?"

"This is folly, dotage," said Ellinor, indignantly; "surely there are others as brave, as gentle, as kind, and if not so wise, yet more fitted for the world."

"You mock me," replied Madeline, incredulously: "whom could you select?"

Ellinor blushed deeply,— blushed from her snowy temples to her yet whiter bosom as she answered,—

"If I said Walter Lester, could you deny it?"

"Walter!" repeated Madeline, — "he equal to Eugene Aram!"

"Ay, and more than equal," said Ellinor, with spirit, and a warm and angry tone. "And, indeed, Madeline," she continued after a pause, "I lose something of that respect which, passing a sister's love, I have always borne towards you when I see the unthinking and lavish idolatry you manifest to one who, but for a silver tongue and florid words, would rather want attractions than be the wonder you esteem him. Fie, Madeline! I blush for you when you speak; it is unmaidenly so to love any one!"

Madeline rose from the window; but the angry word died on her lips when she saw that Ellinor, who had worked her mind beyond her self-control, had thrown herself back on the pillow, and now sobbed aloud.

The natural temper of the elder sister had always been much more calm and even than that of the younger, who united with her vivacity something of the passionate caprice and fitfulness of her sex. And Madeline's affection for her had been tinged by that character of forbearance and soothing which a superior nature often manifests to one more imperfect, and which in this instance did not desert her. She

gently closed the window, and gliding to the bed, threw her arms around her sister's neck and kissed away her tears with a caressing fondness that if Ellinor resisted for one moment, she returned with equal tenderness the next.

"Indeed, dearest," said Madeline, gently, "I cannot guess how I hurt you, and still less how Eugene has offended you!"

"He has offended me in nothing," replied Ellinor, still weeping, "if he has not stolen away *all* your affection from me. But I was a foolish girl,—forgive me, as you always do; and at this time I need your kindness, for I am very, very unhappy."

"Unhappy, dearest Nell, and why?"

Ellinor wept on without answering.

Madeline persisted in pressing for a reply; and at length her sister sobbed out,—

"I know that—that—Walter only has eyes for you, and a heart for you, who neglect, who despise his love; and I—I—But no matter, he is going to leave us, and of me—poor me—he will think no more!"

Ellinor's attachment to their cousin, Madeline had long half suspected, and she had often rallied her sister upon it; indeed, it might have been this suspicion which made her at the first steel her breast against Walter's evident preference to herself. But Ellinor had never till now seriously confessed how much her heart was affected; and Madeline, in the natural engrossment of her own ardent and devoted love, had not of late spared much observation to the tokens of her sister's. She was therefore dismayed, if not surprised, as she now perceived the cause of the peevishness Ellinor had just manifested, and by the nature of the love she felt herself, she judged, and perhaps somewhat overrated, the anguish that Ellinor endured.

She strove to comfort her by all the arguments which the fertile ingenuity of kindness could invent: she prophesied Walter's speedy return, with his boyish disappointment forgotten, and with eyes no longer blinded to the attractions of one sister by a bootless fancy for another. And though Elli-

nor interrupted her from time to time with assertions, now of Walter's eternal constancy to his present idol, now with yet more vehement declarations of the certainty of his finding new objects for his affections in new scenes, she yet admitted, by little and little, the persuasive powers of Madeline to creep into her heart and brighten away its griefs with hope, till at last, with the tears yet wet on her cheek, she fell asleep in her sister's arms.

And Madeline, though she would not stir from her post lest the movement should awaken her sister, was yet prevented from closing her eyes in a similar repose. Ever and anon she breathlessly and gently raised herself to steal a glimpse of that solitary light afar; and ever as she looked, the ray greeted her eyes with an unswerving and melancholy stillness, till the dawn crept grayly over the heavens, and that speck of light, holier to her than the stars, faded also with them beneath the broader lustre of the day.

The next week was passed in preparations for Walter's departure. At that time, and in that distant part of the country, it was greatly the fashion among the younger travellers to perform their excursions on horseback, and it was this method of conveyance that Walter preferred. The best steed in the squire's stable was therefore appropriated to his service, and a strong black horse, with a Roman nose and a long tail, was consigned to the mastery of Corporal Bunting. The squire was delighted that his nephew had secured such an attendant. For the soldier, though odd and selfish, was a man of sense and experience, and Lester thought such qualities might not be without their use to a young master new to the common frauds and daily usages of the world he was about to enter.

As for Bunting himself, he covered his secret exultation at the prospect of change and board-wages with the cool semblance of a man sacrificing his wishes to his affections. He made it his peculiar study to impress upon the squire's mind the extent of the sacrifice he was about to make. The bit cot had been just whitewashed, the pet cat just lain in; then too, who would dig, and gather seeds in the garden, defend

the plants (plants! the corporal could scarce count a dozen, and nine out of them were cabbages!) from the impending frosts? It was exactly, too, the time of year when the rheumatism paid flying visits to the bones and loins of the worthy corporal; and to think of his "gallivanting about the country" when he ought to be guarding against the sly foe, the lumbago, in the fortress of his chimney-corner!

To all these murmurs and insinuations the good Lester seriously inclined, not with the less sympathy in that they invariably ended in the corporal's slapping his manly thigh and swearing that he loved Master Walter like gunpowder, and that were it twenty times as much, he would cheerfully do it for the sake of his handsome young honor. Ever at this peroration the eyes of the squire began to twinkle, and new thanks were given to the veteran for his disinterested affec tion, and new promises pledged him in adequate return.

The pious Dealtry felt a little jealousy at the trust imparted to his friend. He halted on his return from his farm, by the spruce stile which led to the demesne of the corporal, and eyed the warrior somewhat sourly as he now, in the cool of the evening, sat without his door, arranging his fishing-tackle and flies in various little papers, which he carefully labelled by the help of a stunted pen that had seen at least as much service as himself.

"Well, neighbor Bunting," said the little landlord, leaning over the stile, but not passing its boundary, "and when do you go? You will have wet weather of it [looking up to the skies]; you must take care of the rumatiz. At your age it's no trifle, eh — hem."

"My age! Should like to know what mean by that! My age, indeed! augh! bother!" grunted Bunting, looking up from his occupation. Peter chuckled inly at the corporal's displeasure, and continued, as in an apologetic tone,—

"Oh, I ax your pardon, neighbor. I don't mean to say you are too old to travel. Why there was Hal Whitol, eighty-two come next Michaelmas, took a trip to Lunnun last year,—

"'For young and old, the stout, the poorly,
The eye of God be on them surely.'"

"Bother!" said the corporal, turning round on his seat.

"And what do you intend doing with the brindled cat? Put 'un up in the saddle-bags? You won't surely have the heart to leave 'un."

"As to that," quoth the corporal, sighing, "the poor dumb animal makes me sad to think on 't." And putting down his fish-hooks, he stroked the sides of an enormous cat, who now, with tail on end and back bowed up, and uttering her *lenes susurrus*, — *Anglicè*, purr,— rubbed herself to and fro athwart the corporal's legs.

"What staring there for? Won't ye step in, man? Can climb the stile, I suppose? augh!"

"No, thank ye, neighbor. I do very well here,— that is if you can hear me; your deafness is not so troublesome as it was last win —"

"Bother!" interrupted the corporal, in a voice that made the little landlord start bolt upright from the easy confidence of his position. Nothing on earth so offended the perpendicular Jacob Bunting as any insinuation of increasing years or growing infirmities; but at this moment, as he meditated putting Dealtry to some use, he prudently conquered the gathering anger, and added, like the man of the world he justly plumed himself on being, in a voice gentle as a dying howl, —

"What 'fraid on? Come in, there 's good fellow; want to speak to ye. Come, do, a-u-g-h!" the last sound being prolonged into one of unutterable coaxingness, and accompanied with a beck of the hand and a wheedling wink.

These allurements the good Peter could not resist; he clambered the stile, and seated himself on the bench beside the corporal.

"There now, fine fellow, fit for the Forty-second," said Bunting, clapping him on the back. "Well, and — and — a beautiful cat, is n't her?"

"Ah!" said Peter, very shortly; for though a remarkably mild man, Peter did not love cats. Moreover, we must now inform the reader that the cat of Jacob Bunting was one more feared than respected throughout the village. The corporal was a cunning instructor of all animals: he could teach gold-

finches the use of the musket; dogs the art of the broadsword; horses to dance hornpipes and pick pockets; and he had relieved the *ennui* of his solitary moments by imparting sundry accomplishments to the ductile genius of his cat. Under his tuition puss had learned to fetch and carry; to turn over head and tail like a tumbler; to run up your shoulder when you least expected it; to fly as if she were mad at any one upon whom the corporal thought fit to set her; and, above all, to rob larders, shelves, and tables, and bring the produce to the corporal, who never failed to consider such stray waifs lawful manorial acquisitions. These little feline cultivations of talent, however delightful to the corporal, and creditable to his powers of teaching the young idea how to shoot, had nevertheless, since the truth must be told, rendered the corporal's cat a proverb and by-word throughout the neighborhood. Never was cat in such bad odor; and the dislike in which it was held was wonderfully increased by terror: for the creature was singularly large and robust, and withal of so courageous a temper that if you attempted to resist its invasion of your property it forthwith set up its back, put down its ears, opened its mouth, and bade you fully comprehend that what it feloniously seized it could gallantly defend. More than one gossip in the village had this notable cat hurried into premature parturition as, on descending at daybreak into her kitchen, the dame would descry the animal perched on the dresser, having entered Heaven knows how, and glaring upon her with its great green eyes and a malignant *brownie* expression of countenance.

Various deputations had indeed from time to time arrived at the corporal's cottage requesting the death, expulsion, or perpetual imprisonment of the favorite. But the stout corporal received them grimly and dismissed them gruffly; and the cat went on waxing in size and wickedness, and baffling, as if inspired by the devil, the various gins and traps set for its destruction. But never, perhaps, was there a greater disturbance and perturbation in the little hamlet than when, some three weeks since, the corporal's cat was known to be brought to bed and safely delivered of a numerous offspring. The

village saw itself overrun with a race and a perpetuity of corporal's cats. Perhaps, too, their teacher growing more expert by practice, the descendants might attain to even greater accomplishment than their nefarious progenitor. No longer did the faint hope of being delivered from their tormentor by an untimely or even natural death occur to the harassed Grassdalians. Death was an incident natural to one cat, however vivacious; but here was a dynasty of cats! *Principes mortales, respublica æterna!*

Now, the corporal loved this creature better, yes, better than anything in the world except travelling and board-wages; and he was sorely perplexed in his mind how he should be able to dispose of her safely in his absence. He was aware of the general enmity she had inspired, and trembled to anticipate its probable result when he was no longer by to afford her shelter and protection. The squire had, indeed, offered her an asylum at the manor-house; but the squire's cook was the cat's most embittered enemy, and what man can answer for the peaceable behavior of his cook? The corporal, therefore, with a reluctant sigh, renounced the friendly offer; and after lying awake three nights, and turning over in his mind the characters, consciences, and capabilities of all his neighbors, he came at last to the conviction that there was no one with whom he could so safely intrust his cat as Peter Dealtry. It is true, as we said before, that Peter was no lover of cats; and the task of persuading him to afford board and lodging to a cat of all cats the most odious and malignant, was therefore no easy matter. But to a man of the world what intrigue is impossible?

The finest diplomatist in Europe might have taken a lesson from the corporal, as he now proceeded earnestly towards the accomplishment of his project.

He took the cat,—which, by the by, we forgot to say that he had thought fit to christen after himself, and to honor with a name, somewhat lengthy for a cat (but, indeed, this was no ordinary cat!), namely, Jacobina,—he took Jacobina then, we say, upon his lap, and stroking her brindled sides with great tenderness, he bade Dealtry remark how singularly quiet the

animal was in its manners. Nay, he was not contented until Peter himself had patted her with a timorous hand, and had reluctantly submitted the said hand to the honor of being licked by the cat in return. Jacobina, who, to do her justice, was always meek enough in the presence and at the will of her master, was, fortunately, this day, on her very best behavior.

"Them dumb animals be mighty grateful," quoth the corporal.

"Ah!" rejoined Peter, wiping his hand with his pocket-handkerchief.

"But, Lord, what scandal there be in the world!"

"'Though slander's breath may raise a storm,
It quickly does decay!'"

muttered Peter.

"Very well, very true,—sensible verses those," said the corporal, approvingly; "and yet mischief 's often done before the amends come. Body o' me, it makes a man sick of his kind, ashamed to belong to the race of men, to see the envy that abounds in this here sublunary wale of tears!" said the corporal, lifting up his eyes.

Peter stared at him with open mouth. The hypocritical rascal continued, after a pause,—

"Now, there 's Jacobina: 'cause she's a good cat, a faithful servant, the whole village is against her. Such lies as they tell on her, such wappers, you 'd think she was the devil in garnet! I grant, I grant," added the corporal, in a tone of apologetic candor, "that she 's wild, saucy, knows her friends from her foes, steals Goody Solomon's butter; but what then? Goody Solomon 's d—d b—h! Goody Solomon sold beer in opposition to you, set up a public: you do not like Goody Solomon, Peter Dealtry?"

"If that were all Jacobina had done!" said the landlord, grinning.

"All! What else did she do? Why she eat up John Tomkins's canary bird; and did not John Tomkins, saucy rascal! say you could not sing better nor a raven?"

"I have nothing to say against the poor creature for that," said Peter, stroking the cat of his own accord. "Cats *will* eat birds,—'t is the 'spensation of Providence. But what, corporal!"—and Peter, hastily withdrawing his hand, hurried it into his breeches' pocket—"but what! did not she scratch Joe Webster's little boy's hand into ribbons because the boy tried to prevent her running off with a ball of string?"

"And well," grunted the corporal, "that was not Jacobina's doing, that was my doing. I wanted the string,—offered to pay a penny for it; think of that!"

"It was priced twopence ha'penny," said Peter.

"Augh, baugh! you would not pay Joe Webster all he asks! What's the use of being a man of the world unless one makes one's tradesmen bate a bit? Bargaining is not cheating, I hope!"

"Heaven forbid!" said Peter.

"But as to the bit string, Jacobina took it solely for your sake. Ah, she did not think *you* were to turn against her!"

So saying, the corporal got up, walked into his house, and presently came back with a little net in his hand.

"There, Peter, net for you, to hold lemons. Thank Jacobina for that; she got the string. Says I to her one day, as I was sitting, as I might be now, without the door: 'Jacobina, Peter Dealtry's a good fellow, and he keeps his lemons in a bag: bad habit,—get mouldy; we'll make him a net;' and Jacobina purred (stroke the poor creature, Peter!)—so Jacobina and I took a walk, and when we came to Joe Webster's, I pointed out the ball of twine to her. So, for your sake, Peter, she got into this here scrape, augh."

"Ah!" quoth Peter, laughing, "poor puss! poor pussy! poor little pussy!"

"And now, Peter," said the corporal, taking his friend's hand, "I am going to prove friendship to you,—going to do you great favor."

"Aha!" said Peter. "My good friend, I'm very much obliged to you. I know your kind heart, but I really don't want any—"

"Bother!" cried the corporal; "I 'm not the man as makes much of doing a friend a kindness. Hold jaw! Tell you what, tell you what: am going away on Wednesday at daybreak, and in my absence you shall—"

"What, my good corporal?"

"Take charge of Jacobina!"

"Take charge of the devil!" cried Peter.

"Augh! baugh! What words are those? Listen to me."

"I won't!"

"You shall!"

"I 'll be d—d if I do!" quoth Peter, sturdily. It was the first time he had been known to swear since he was parish clerk.

"Very well, very well!" said the corporal, chucking up his chin. "Jacobina can take care of herself! Jacobina knows her friends and her foes as well as her master! Jacobina never injures her friends, never forgives foes. Look to yourself! look to yourself! Insult my cat, insult me! Swear at Jacobina, indeed!"

"If she steals my cream!" cried Peter.

"Did she ever steal your cream?"

"No; but if—"

"Did she ever steal your cream?"

"I can't say she ever did."

"Or anything else of yours?"

"Not that I know of; but—"

"Never too late to mend."

"If—"

"Will you listen to me, or not?"

"Well."

"You 'll listen?"

"Yes."

"Know, then, that I wanted to do you kindness."

"Humph!"

"Hold jaw! I taught Jacobina all she knows."

"More 's the pity!"

"Hold jaw! I taught her to respect her friends, never to commit herself in-doors, never to steal at home, never to fly

at home, never to scratch at home, to kill mice and rats, to bring all she catches to her master, to do what he tells her, and to defend his house as well as a mastiff; and this invaluable creature I was going to lend you. Won't now, d — d if I do!"

"Humph!"

"Hold jaw! When I am gone, Jacobina will have no one to feed her. She 'll feed herself,— will go to every larder, every house in the place: yours best larder, best house; will come to you oftenest. If your wife attempts to drive her away, scratch her eyes out; if you disturb her, serve you worse than Joe Webster's little boy. Wanted to prevent this,— won't now, d — d if I do!"

"But, corporal, how would it mend the matter to take the devil in-doors?"

"Devil! Don't call names. Did I not tell you, only one Jacobina does not hurt is her master? Make you her master: now d' ye see?"

"It is very hard," said Peter, grumblingly, "that the only way I can defend myself from this villanous creature is to take her into my house."

"Villanous! You ought to be proud of her affection. *She* returns good for evil,— she always loved you: see how she rubs herself against you; and that 's the reason why I selected you from the whole village to take care of her. But you at once injure yourself and refuse to do your friend a service. Howsomever, you know I shall be with young squire, and he 'll be master here one of these days, and I shall have an influence over him,— you 'll see, you 'll see. Look that there 's not another Spotted Dog set up, augh! bother!"

"But what would my wife say if I took the cat? She can't abide its name."

"Let me alone to talk to your wife. What would she say if I bring her from Lunnun town a fine silk gown, or a neat shawl with a blue border,— blue becomes her,— or a tay-chest that will do for you both, and would set off the little back parlor? Mahogany tay-chest, inlaid at top, initials in silver, J. B. to D. and P. D.; two boxes for tay, and a bowl for sugar

in the middle. Ah! ah! Love me, love my cat! When was Jacob Bunting ungrateful? augh!"

"Well, well! will you talk to Dorothy about it?"

"I shall have your consent, then? Thanks, my dear, dear Peter! 'Pon my soul you're a fine fellow! you see, you're great man of the parish. If you protect her, none dare injure; if you scout her, all set upon her. For, as you said, or rather sung, t' other Sunday, — capital voice you were in, too, —

"'The mighty tyrants without cause
Conspire her blood to shed!'"

"I did not think you had so good a memory, corporal," said Peter, smiling. The cat was now curling itself up in his lap. "After all, Jacobina — what a deuce of a name! — seems gentle enough."

"Gentle as a lamb, soft as butter, kind as cream, and such a mouser!"

"But I don't think Dorothy —"

"I'll settle Dorothy."

"Well, when will you look up?"

"Come and take a dish of tay with you in half an hour,— you want a new tay-chest; something new and genteel."

"I think we do," said Peter, rising, and gently depositing the cat on the ground.

"Aha! we'll see to it; we'll see! Good-by for the present; in half an hour be with you!"

The corporal, left alone with Jacobina, eyed her intently, and burst into the following pathetic address: —

"Well, Jacobina, you little know the pains I takes to serve you, the lies I tells for you,— endangered my precious soul for your sake, you jade! Ah! may well rub your sides against me. Jacobina! Jacobina! you be the only thing in the world that cares a button for me. I have neither kith nor kin. You are daughter, friend, wife to me; if anything happened to you, I should not have the heart to love anything else. And body o' me, but you be as kind as any mistress, and much more tractable than any wife; but the world gives you a bad name, Jacobina. Why? Is it that you do worse than the

world do? You has no morality in you, Jacobina; well, but has the world? No! But it has humbug,—you have no humbug, Jacobina. On the faith of a man, Jacobina, you be better than the world, baugh! You takes care of your own interest, but you takes care of your master's too! You loves me well as yourself. Few cats can say the same, Jacobina, and no gossip that flings a stone at your pretty brindled skin can say half as much. We must not forget your kittens, Jacobina; you have four left,—they must be provided for. Why not a cat's children as well as a courtier's? I have got you a comfortable home, Jacobina; take care of yourself, and don't fall in love with every tom-cat in the place. Be sober, and lead a single life till my return. Come, Jacobina, we will lock up the house and go and see the quarters I have provided for you. Heigho!"

As he finished his harangue the corporal locked the door of his cottage, and Jacobina trotting by his side, he stalked with his usual stateliness to The Spotted Dog.

Dame Dorothy Dealtry received him with a clouded brow; but the man of the world knew whom he had to deal with. On Wednesday morning Jacobina was inducted into the comforts of the hearth of mine host, and her four little kittens mewed hard by, from the sinecure of a basket lined with flannel.

Reader, here is wisdom in this chapter: it is not every man who knows how to dispose of his cat.

CHAPTER XII.

A STRANGE HABIT.— WALTER'S INTERVIEW WITH MADELINE. —HER GENEROUS AND CONFIDING DISPOSITION.— WALTER'S ANGER.— THE PARTING MEAL.— CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE UNCLE AND NEPHEW.— WALTER ALONE.— SLEEP THE BLESSING OF THE YOUNG.

Fall. Out, out! unworthy to speak where he breatheth, . . .
Punt. Well, now my whole venture is forth, I will resolve to depart.
BEN JONSON: *Every Man out of his Humor.*

IT was now the eve before Walter's departure, and on returning home from a farewell walk among his favorite haunts, he found Aram, whose visit had been made during Walter's absence, now standing on the threshold of the door and taking leave of Madeline and her father. Aram and Walter had only met twice before since the interview we recorded, and each time Walter had taken care that the meeting should be but of short duration. In these brief encounters Aram's manner had been even more gentle than heretofore; that of Walter more cold and distant. And now, as they thus unexpectedly met at the door, Aram, looking at him earnestly, said,—

"Farewell, sir! You are to leave us for some time, I hear. Heaven speed you!" Then he added, in a lower tone, "Will you take my hand now, in parting?"

As he said, he put forth his hand,— it was the left.

"Let it be the right hand," observed the elder Lester, smiling; "it is a luckier omen."

"I think not," said Aram, dryly. And Walter noted that he had never remembered him to give his right hand to any one, even to Madeline: the peculiarity of this habit might, however, arise from an awkward early habit; it was certainly scarce worth observing, and Walter had already coldly touched the hand extended to him when Lester said carelessly,—

"Is there any superstition that makes you think, as some of the ancients did, the left hand luckier than the right?"

"Yes," replied Aram; "a superstition. Adieu!"

The student departed. Madeline slowly walked up one of the garden alleys; and thither Walter, after whispering to his uncle, followed her.

There is something in those bitter feelings which are the offspring of disappointed love, something in the intolerable anguish of well-founded jealousy, that, when the first shock is over, often hardens, and perhaps elevates the character. The sterner powers that we arouse within us to combat a passion that can no longer be worthily indulged are never afterwards wholly allayed. Like the allies which a nation summons to its bosom to defend it from its foes, they expel the enemy only to find a settlement for themselves. The mind of every man who *conquers* an unfortunate attachment becomes stronger than before; it may be for evil, it may be for good, but the capacities for either are more vigorous and collected.

The last few weeks had done more for Walter's character than years of ordinary, even of happy, emotion might have effected. He had passed from youth to manhood; and with the sadness had acquired also something of the dignity of experience. Not that we would say that he had subdued his love, but he had made the first step towards it: he had resolved that at all hazards it should *be* subdued.

As he now joined Madeline, and she perceived him by her side, her embarrassment was more evident than his. She feared some avowal, and, from his temper, perhaps some violence on his part. However, she was the first to speak: women in such cases always are.

"It is a beautiful evening," said she; "and the sun set in promise of a fine day for your journey to-morrow."

Walter walked on silently; his heart was full. "Madeline," he said at length, "dear Madeline, give me your hand. Nay, do not fear me; I know what you think, and you are right: I loved — I still love you! But I know well that I can have no hope in making this confession; and when I ask you for your

hand, Madeline, it is only to convince you that I have no suit to press: had I, I would not dare to touch that hand."

Madeline, wondering and embarrassed, gave him her hand; he held it for a moment with a trembling clasp, pressed it to his lips, and then resigned it.

"Yes, Madeline, my cousin, my sweet cousin, I have loved you deeply, but silently, long before my heart could unravel the mystery of the feelings with which it glowed. But this, all this, it were now idle to repeat. I know that the heart whose possession would have made my whole life a dream, a transport, is given to another. I have not sought you now, Madeline, to repine at this, or to vex you by the tale of any suffering I may endure; I am come only to give you the parting wishes, the parting blessing, of one who, wherever he goes or whatever befall him, will always think of you as the brightest and loveliest of human beings. May you be happy,—yes, even with another!"

"Oh, Walter!" said Madeline, affected to tears, "if I ever encouraged, if I ever led you to hope for more than the warm, the sisterly affection I bear you, how bitterly I should reproach myself!"

"You never did, dear Madeline; I asked for no inducement to love you,—I never dreamed of seeking a motive or inquiring if I had cause to hope. But as I am now about to quit you, and as you confess you feel for me a sister's affection, will you give me leave to speak to you as a brother might?"

Madeline held out her hand to him with frank cordiality. "Yes," said she; "speak!"

"Then," said Walter, turning away his head in a spirit of delicacy that did him honor, "is it yet all too late for me to say one word of caution that relates to—Eugene Aram?"

"Of caution! You alarm me, Walter; speak! Has aught happened to him? I saw him as lately as yourself. Does aught threaten him? Speak, I implore you, quick!"

"I know of no danger to *him!*" replied Walter, stung to perceive the breathless anxiety with which Madeline spoke; "but pause, my cousin: may there be no danger to you from this man?"

"Walter!"

"I grant him wise, learned, gentle,—nay, more than all, bearing about him a spell, a fascination, by which he softens or awes at will, and which even I cannot resist. But yet his abstracted mood, his gloomy life, certain words that have broken from him unawares, certain tell-tale emotions which words of mine, heedlessly said, have fiercely aroused, all united, inspire me — shall I say it? — with fear and distrust. I cannot think him altogether the calm and pure being he appears. Madeline, I have asked myself again and again, Is this suspicion the effect of jealousy? Do I scan his bearing with the jaundiced eye of disappointed rivalship? And I have satisfied my conscience that my judgment is not thus biassed. Stay; listen yet a little while! You have a high, a thoughtful mind. Exert it now. Consider, your whole happiness rests on one step! Pause, examine, compare! Remember, you have not of Aram, as of those whom you have hitherto mixed with, the eye-witness of a life. You *can* know but little of his real temper, his secret qualities; still less of the tenor of his former existence. I only ask of you, for your own sake, for my sake, your sister's sake, and your good father's, not to judge too rashly! Love him, if you will; but observe him!"

"Have you done?" said Madeline, who had hitherto with difficulty contained herself. "Then hear me. Was it I — was it Madeline Lester — whom you asked to play the watch, to enact the spy upon the man whom she exults in loving? Was it not enough that *you* should descend to mark down each incautious look, to chronicle every heedless word, to draw dark deductions from the unsuspecting confidence of my father's friend, to lie in wait, to hang with a foe's malignity upon the unbendings of familiar intercourse, to extort anger from gentleness itself, that you might wrest the anger into crime? Shame, shame upon you for the meanness! And must you also suppose that I, to whose trust he has given his noble heart, will receive it only to play the eavesdropper to its secrets? Away!"

The generous blood crimsoned the cheek and brow of this

high-spirited girl as she uttered her galling reproof; her eyes sparkled, her lip quivered, her whole frame seemed to have grown larger with the majesty of indignant love.

"Cruel, unjust, ungrateful!" ejaculated Walter, pale with rage, and trembling under the conflict of his roused and wounded feelings. "Is it thus you answer the warning of too disinterested and self-forgetful a love?"

"Love!" exclaimed Madeline. "Grant me patience! Love! It was but now I thought myself honored by the affection you said you bore me. At this instant I blush to have called forth a single sentiment in one who knows so little what love is! Love! Methought that word denoted all that was high and noble in human nature,— confidence, hope, devotion, sacrifice of all thought of self! But you would make it the type and concentration of all that lowers and debases,— suspicion, cavil, fear, selfishness in all its shapes! Out on you! *Love!*"

"Enough, enough! Say no more, Madeline; say no more. We part not as I had hoped; but be it so. You are changed indeed if your conscience smite you not hereafter for this injustice. Farewell! and may you never regret, not only the heart you have rejected, but the friendship you have belied." With these words, and choked by his emotions, Walter hastily strode away.

He hurried into the house and into a little room adjoining the chamber in which he slept, and which had been also appropriated solely to his use. It was now spread with boxes and trunks, some half-packed, some corded, and inscribed with the address to which they were to be sent in London. All these mute tokens of his approaching departure struck upon his excited feelings with a suddenness that overpowered him.

"And it is thus, thus," said he, aloud, "that I am to leave, for the first time, my childhood's home!"

He threw himself on his chair, and, covering his face with his hands, burst, fairly subdued and unmanned, into a paroxysm of tears.

When this emotion was over, he felt as if his love for Madeline had also disappeared; a sore and insulted feeling was all that her image now recalled to him. This idea gave him

some consolation. "Thank Heaven!" he muttered; "thank Heaven, I am cured at last!"

The thanksgiving was scarcely over before the door opened softly, and Ellinor, not perceiving him where he sat, entered the room and laid on the table a purse which she had long promised to knit him, and which seemed now designed as a parting gift.

She sighed heavily as she laid it down, and he observed that her eyes seemed red as with weeping.

He did not move, and Ellinor left the room without discovering him; but he remained there till dark, musing on her apparition, and before he went downstairs he took up the little purse, kissed it, and put it carefully into his bosom.

He sat next to Ellinor at supper that evening; and though he did not say much, his last words were more to her than words had ever been before. When he took leave of her for the night, he whispered, as he kissed her cheek, "God bless you, dearest Ellinor! and till I return, take care of yourself, for the sake of one who loves you *now* better than anything on earth."

Lester had just left the room to write some letters for Walter; and Madeline, who had hitherto sat absorbed and silent by the window, approached Walter and offered him her hand.

"Forgive me, my dear cousin," she said, in her softest voice. "I feel that I was hasty, and to blame. Believe me, I am now at least grateful, warmly grateful, for the kindness of your motives."

"Not so," said Walter, bitterly; "the advice of a friend is only meanness."

"Come, come, forgive me; pray do not let us part unkindly. When did we ever quarrel before? I was wrong, — grievously wrong. I will perform any penance you may enjoin."

"Agreed, then: follow my admonitions."

"Ah! anything else," said Madeline, gravely, and coloring deeply.

Walter said no more; he pressed her hand lightly, and turned away.

"Is all forgiven?" said she, in so bewitching a tone, and with so bright a smile, that Walter, against his conscience, answered "Yes."

The sisters left the room: I know not which of the two received his last glance.

Lester now returned with the letters. "There is one charge, my dear boy," said he, in concluding the moral injunctions and experienced suggestions with which the young generally leave the ancestral home,—"there is one charge which I need not commend to your ingenuity and zeal. You know my strong conviction that your father, my poor brother, still lives. Is it necessary for me to tell you to exert yourself by all ways and in all means to discover some clew to his fate? Who knows," added Lester, with a smile, "but that you may find him a rich nabob! I confess that I should feel but little surprise if it were so; but at all events you will make every possible inquiry. I have written down in this paper the few particulars concerning him which I have been enabled to glean since he left his home,—the places where he was last seen, the false names he assumed, etc. I shall wait with great anxiety for any fuller success to your researches."

"You needed not, my dear uncle," said Walter, seriously, "to have spoken to me on this subject. No one, not even yourself, can have felt what I have, can have cherished the same anxiety, nursed the same hope, indulged the same conjecture. I have not, it is true, often of late years spoken to you on a matter so near to us both; but I have spent whole hours in guesses at my father's fate, and in dreams that for me was reserved the proud task to discover it. I will not say, indeed, that it makes at this moment the chief motive for my desire to travel, but in travel it will become my chief object. Perhaps I may find him, not only rich,—that, for my part, is but a minor wish,—but sobered, and reformed from the errors and wildness of his earlier manhood. Oh, what should be his gratitude to you for all the care with which you have supplied to the forsaken child the father's place; and not the least that you have, in softening the colors of his conduct, taught me still to prize and seek for a father's love!"

"You have a kind heart, Walter," said the good old man, pressing his nephew's hand; "and that has more than repaid me for the little I have done for you. It is better to sow a good heart with kindness than a field with corn; for the heart's harvest is perpetual."

Many and earnest that night were the meditations of Walter Lester. He was about to quit the home in which youth had been passed, in which first love had been formed and blighted: the world was before him; but there was something more grave than pleasure, more steady than enterprise, that beckoned him to its paths. The deep mystery that for so many years had hung over the fate of his parent, it might indeed be his lot to pierce; and with a common waywardness in our nature, the restless son felt his interest in that parent the livelier, from the very circumstance of remembering nothing of his person. Affection had been nursed by curiosity and imagination; and the bad father was thus more fortunate in winning the heart of the son, than had he, perhaps, by the tenderness of years, deserved that affection.

Oppressed and feverish, Walter opened the lattice of his room and looked forth on the night. The broad harvest-moon was in the heavens, and filled the air as with a softer and holier day. At a distance its light just gave the dark outline of Aram's house, and beneath the window it lay bright and steady on the green, still church-yard, that adjoined the house. The air and the light allayed the fitfulness at the young man's heart, but served to solemnize the project and desire with which it beat. Still leaning from the casement, with his eyes fixed upon the tranquil scene below, he poured forth the prayer that to his hands might the discovery of his lost sire be granted. The prayer seemed to lift the oppression from his breast; he felt cheerful and relieved, and, flinging himself on his bed, soon fell into the sound and healthful sleep of youth. And oh! let youth cherish that happiest of earthly boons while yet it is at its command; for there cometh the day to all when "neither the voice of the lute nor the birds"[1] shall bring back the sweet slumbers that fell on their young eyes

[1] Non avium citharæque, etc. — HORACE.

as unbidden as the dews. It is a dark epoch in a man's life when sleep forsakes him; when he tosses to and fro, and thought will not be silenced; when the drug and draught are the courters of stupefaction, not sleep; when the down pillow is as a knotted log; when the eyelids close but with an effort, and there is a drag and a weight and a dizziness in the eyes at morn. Desire and grief and love, these are the young man's torments; but they are the creatures of time: time removes them as it brings, and the vigils we keep, "while the evil days come not," if weary, are brief and few. But memory and care and ambition and avarice, *these* are demon-gods that defy the Time that fathered them. The worldlier passions are the growth of mature years, and their grave is dug but in our own. As the dark spirits, in the Northern tale, that watch against the coming of one of a brighter and holier race, lest, if he seize them unawares, he bind them prisoners in his chain, they keep ward at night over the entrance of that deep cave, the human heart, and scare away the angel Sleep.

BOOK II.

Ἀμφὶ δ' ἀνθρώ-
πων φρεσὶν ἀμπλακίαι
Ἀναρίθματοι κρέμανται.
Τοῦτο δ' ἀμάχανον εὑρεῖν,
Ὅτι νῦν, καὶ ἐν τελευ-
τᾷ φέρτατον ἀνδρὶ τυχεῖν.

PINDAR: Ode vii. 4.

Paraphrase.

Innumerous, o'er their human prey,
Grim errors hang the hoarded sorrow;
Through vapor gleams the present day,
And darkness wraps the morrow.

CHAPTER I.

THE MARRIAGE SETTLED.—LESTER'S HOPES AND SCHEMES.—GAYETY OF TEMPER.—A GOOD SPECULATION.—THE TRUTH AND FERVOR OF ARAM'S LOVE.

LOVE is better than a pair of spectacles to make everything seem greater which is seen through it.—SIR PHILIP SYDNEY: *Arcadia.*

ARAM'S affection to Madeline having now been formally announced to Lester, and Madeline's consent having been somewhat less formally obtained, it only remained to fix the time for their wedding. Though Lester forbore to question Aram as to his circumstances, the student frankly confessed that if not affording what the generality of persons would consider even a competence, they enabled one of his moderate wants and retired life (especially in the remote and cheap district in which they lived) to dispense with all fortune in a wife who, like Madeline, was, equally with himself, enamoured

of obscurity. The good Lester, however, proposed to bestow upon his daughter such a portion as might allow for the wants of an increased family or the probable contingencies of Fate. For though Fortune may often slacken her wheel, there is no spot in which she suffers it to be wholly still.

It was now the middle of September, and by the end of the ensuing month it was agreed that the spousals of the lovers should be held. It is certain that Lester felt one pang for his nephew as he subscribed to this proposal; but he consoled himself with recurring to a hope he had long cherished, namely, that Walter would return home not only cured of his vain attachment to Madeline, but with the disposition to admit the attractions of her sister. A marriage between these two cousins had for years been his favorite project. The lively and ready temper of Ellinor, her household turn, her merry laugh, a winning playfulness that characterized even her defects, were all more after Lester's secret heart than the graver and higher nature of his elder daughter. This might mainly be that they were traits of disposition that more reminded him of his lost wife, and were, therefore, more accordant with his ideal standard of perfection; but I incline also to believe that the more persons advance in years, the more, even if of staid and sober temper themselves, they love gayety and elasticity in youth. I have often pleased myself by observing, in some happy family circle embracing all ages, that it is the liveliest and wildest child that charms the grandsire the most. And, after all, it is perhaps with characters as with books,—the grave and thoughtful may be more admired than the light and cheerful, but they are less liked; it is not only that the former, being of a more abstruse and recondite nature, find fewer persons capable of judging of their merits, but also that the great object of the majority of human beings is to be amused, and that they naturally incline to love those the best who amuse them most. And to so great a practical extent is this preference pushed that I think were a nice observer to make a census of all those who have received legacies or dropped unexpectedly into fortunes, he would find that where one grave disposition had so benefited, there would be at least

twenty gay. Perhaps, however, it may be said that I am here taking the cause for the effect.

But to return from our speculative disquisitions. Lester, then, who, though he had so slowly discovered his nephew's passion for Madeline, had long since guessed the secret of Ellinor's affection for him, looked forward with a hope rather sanguine than anxious to the ultimate realization of his cherished domestic scheme. And he pleased himself with thinking that when all soreness would, by this double wedding, be banished from Walter's mind, it would be impossible to conceive a family group more united or more happy.

And Ellinor herself, ever since the parting words of her cousin, had seemed, so far from being inconsolable for his absence, more bright of cheek and elastic of step than she had been for months before. What a world of all feelings which forbid despondence lies hoarded in the hearts of the young! As one fountain is filled by the channels that exhaust another, we cherish wisdom at the expense of hope. It thus happened, from one cause or another, that Walter's absence created a less cheerless blank in the family circle than might have been expected; and the approaching bridal of Madeline and her lover naturally diverted, in a great measure, the thoughts of each, and engrossed their conversation.

Whatever might be Madeline's infatuation as to the merits of Aram, one merit — the greatest of all in the eyes of a woman who loves — he at least possessed. Never was mistress more burningly and deeply loved than she who, for the first time, awoke the long-slumbering passions in the heart of Eugene Aram. Every day the ardor of his affections seemed to increase. With what anxiety he watched her footsteps; with what idolatry he hung upon her words; with what unspeakable and yearning emotion he gazed upon the changeful eloquence of her cheek! Now that Walter was gone, he almost took up his abode at the manor-house. He came thither in the early morning, and rarely returned home before the family retired for the night; and even then, when all was hushed, and they believed him in his solitary home, he lingered for hours around the house to look up to Madeline's

window, charmed to the spot which held the intoxication of her presence. Madeline discovered this habit, and chid it; but so tenderly that it was not cured. And still at times, by the autumnal moon, she marked from her window his dark figure gliding among the shadows of the trees, or pausing by the lowly tombs in the still church-yard,—the resting-place of hearts that once, perhaps, beat as wildly as his own.

It was impossible that a love of this order, and from one so richly gifted as Aram,—a love which in substance was truth, and yet in language poetry,—could fail wholly to subdue and enthrall a girl so young, so romantic, so enthusiastic, as Madeline Lester. How intense and delicious must have been her sense of happiness! In the pure heart of a girl loving for the first time, love is far more ecstatic than in man, inasmuch as it is unfevered by desire; love, then and there, makes the only state of human existence which is at once capable of calmness and transport.

CHAPTER II.

A FAVORABLE SPECIMEN OF A NOBLEMAN AND A COURTIER. —A MAN OF SOME FAULTS AND MANY ACCOMPLISHMENTS.

TITINIUS Capito is to rehearse. He is a man of an excellent disposition, and to be numbered among the chief ornaments of his age. He cultivates literature, he loves men of learning, etc. — LORD ORRERY: *Pliny.*

ABOUT this time the Earl of ——, the great nobleman of the district, and whose residence was within a few miles of Grassdale, came down to pay his wonted yearly visit to his country domains. He was a man well known in the history of the times, though for various reasons I conceal his name. He was a courtier,—deep, wily, accomplished, but capable of generous sentiments and enlarged views. Though from regard to his interests he seized and lived as it were upon the fleeting spirit of the day, the penetration of his intellect went

far beyond its reach. He claims the merit of having been the one of all his contemporaries (Lord Chesterfield alone excepted) who most clearly saw and most distinctly prophesied the dark and fearful storm that, at the close of the century, burst over France,— visiting indeed the sins of the fathers upon the sons.

From the small circle of pompous trifles in which the dwellers of a court are condemned to live, and which he brightened by his abilities and graced by his accomplishments, the sagacious and far-sighted mind of Lord —— comprehended the vast field without, usually invisible to those of his habits and profession. Men who the best know the little nucleus which is called the world are often the most ignorant of mankind; but it was the peculiar attribute of this nobleman that he could not only analyze the external customs of his species, but also penetrate into their deeper and more hidden interests.

The works and correspondence he has left behind him, though far from voluminous, testify a consummate knowledge of the varieties of human nature. The refinement of his taste appears less remarkable than the vigor of his understanding. It might be that he knew the vices of men better than their virtues; yet he was no shallow disbeliever in the latter,— he read the heart too accurately not to know that it is guided as often by its affections as its interests. In his early life he had incurred, not without truth, the charge of licentiousness; but even in pursuit of pleasure he had been neither weak on the one hand, nor gross on the other,— neither the headlong dupe nor the callous sensualist. But his graces, his rank, his wealth, had made his conquests a matter of too easy purchase; and hence, like all voluptuaries, the part of his worldly knowledge which was the most fallible was that which related to the sex. He judged of women by a standard too distinct from that by which he judged of men, and considered those foibles peculiar to the sex which in reality are incident to human nature.

His natural disposition was grave and reflective; and though he was not without wit, it was rarely used. He lived, necessarily, with the frivolous and the ostentatious; yet ostenta-

tion and frivolity were charges never brought against himself. As a diplomatist and a statesman, he was of the old and erroneous school of intriguers; but his favorite policy was the science of conciliation. He was one who would so far have suited the present age that no man could better have steered a nation from the chances of war: James the First could not have been inspired with a greater affection for peace; but the peer's dexterity would have made that peace as honorable as the king's weakness made it degraded. Ambitious to a certain extent, but neither grasping nor mean, he never obtained for his genius the full and extensive field it probably deserved. He loved a happy life above all things; and he knew that, while activity is the spirit, fatigue is the bane, of happiness.

In his day he enjoyed a large share of that public attention which generally bequeaths fame; yet from several causes (of which his own moderation is not the least), his present reputation is infinitely less great than the opinions of his most distinguished contemporaries foreboded.

It is a more difficult matter for men of high rank to become illustrious to posterity than for persons in a sterner and more wholesome walk of life. Even the greatest among the distinguished men of the patrician order suffer in the eyes of the after-age for the very qualities, chiefly dazzling defects or brilliant eccentricities, which made them most popularly remarkable in their day. Men forgive Burns his amours and his revellings with greater ease than they will forgive Bolingbroke and Byron for the same offences.

Our earl was fond of the society of literary men; he himself was well, perhaps even deeply, read. Certainly his intellectual acquisitions were more profound than they have been generally esteemed, though, with the common subtlety of a ready genius, he could make the quick adaptation of a timely fact, acquired for the occasion, appear the rich overflowing of a copious erudition. He was a man who instantly perceived and liberally acknowledged the merits of others. No connoisseur had a more felicitous knowledge of the arts, or was more just in the general objects of his patronage. In short, what with all his advantages, he was one whom an aristocracy may boast

of, though a people may forget; and if not a great man, was at least a most remarkable lord.

The Earl of ——, in his last visit to his estates, had not forgotten to seek out the eminent scholar who shed an honor upon his neighborhood. He had been greatly struck with the bearing and conversation of Aram; and with the usual felicity with which the accomplished earl adapted his nature to those with whom he was thrown, he had succeeded in ingratiating himself with Aram in return. He could not, indeed, persuade the haughty and solitary student to visit him at the castle; but the earl did not disdain to seek any one from whom he could obtain instruction, and he had twice or thrice voluntarily encountered Aram, and effectually drawn him from his reserve. The earl now heard, with some pleasure and more surprise, that the austere recluse was about to be married to the beauty of the county, and he resolved to seize the first occasion to call at the manor-house to offer his compliments and congratulations to its inmates.

Sensible men of rank, who having enjoyed their dignity from their birth may reasonably be expected to grow occasionally tired of it, often like mixing with those the most who are the least dazzled by the condescension,—I do not mean to say with the vulgar *parvenus* who mistake rudeness for independence; no man forgets respect to another who knows the value of respect to himself. But the respect should be paid easily; it is not every *Grand Seigneur* who, like Louis the Fourteenth, is only pleased when he puts those he addresses out of countenance.

There was, therefore, much in the simplicity of Lester's manners and those of his daughters which rendered the family at the manor-house especial favorites with Lord ——; and the wealthier but less honored squirearchs of the county, stiff in awkward pride, and bustling with yet more awkward veneration, heard with astonishment and anger of the numerous visits which his lordship, in his brief sojourn at the castle, always contrived to pay to the Lesters, and the constant invitations which they received to his most familiar festivities.

Lord —— was no sportsman; and one morning, when all

his guests were engaged among the stubbles of September, he mounted his quiet palfrey and gladly took his way to the manor-house.

It was towards the latter end of the month, and one of the earliest of the autumnal fogs hung thinly over the landscape. As the earl wound along the sides of the hill on which his castle was built, the scene on which he gazed below received from the gray mists capriciously hovering over it a dim and melancholy wildness. A broader and whiter vapor, that streaked the lower part of the valley, betrayed the course of the rivulet; and beyond, to the left, rose, wan and spectral, the spire of the little church adjoining Lester's abode. As the horseman's eye wandered to this spot, the sun suddenly broke forth and lit up as by enchantment the quiet and lovely hamlet embedded, as it were, beneath, — the cottages, with their gay gardens and jasmined porches; the streamlet half in mist, half in light; while here and there columns of vapor rose above its surface like the chariots of the water-genii, and broke into a thousand hues beneath the smiles of the unexpected sun. But far to the right, the mists around it yet unbroken, and the outline of its form only visible, rose the lone house of the student, as if there the sadder spirits of the air yet rallied their broken armament of mist and shadow.

The earl was not a man peculiarly alive to scenery, but he now involuntarily checked his horse and gazed for a few moments on the beautiful and singular aspect which the landscape had so suddenly assumed. As he so gazed, he observed in a field at some little distance three or four persons gathered round a bank, and among them he thought he recognized the comely form of Rowland Lester. A second inspection convinced him that he was right in his conjecture, and turning from the road through a gap in the hedge, he made towards the group in question. He had not proceeded far before he saw that the remainder of the party was composed of Lester's daughters, the lover of the elder, and a fourth, whom he recognized as a celebrated French botanist who had lately arrived in England, and who was now making an amateur excursion throughout the more attractive districts of the island.

The earl guessed rightly that Monsieur de N—— had not neglected to apply to Aram for assistance in a pursuit which the latter was known to have cultivated with such success, and that he had been conducted hither as to a place affording some specimen or another not unworthy of research. He now, giving his horse to his groom, joined the group.

CHAPTER III.

WHEREIN THE EARL AND THE STUDENT CONVERSE ON GRAVE BUT DELIGHTFUL MATTERS.—THE STUDENT'S NOTION OF THE ONLY EARTHLY HAPPINESS.

> *Aram.* If the witch Hope forbids us to be wise,
> Yet when I turn to these, Woe's only friends (*pointing to his books*),
> And with their weird and eloquent voices calm
> The stir and Babel of the world within,
> I can but dream that my vexed years at last
> Shall find the quiet of a hermit's cell;
> And, neighboring not this worn and jaded world,
> Beneath the lambent eyes of the loved stars,
> And with the hollow rocks and sparry caves,
> The tides, and all the many-musicked winds,
> My oracles and co-mates, watch my life
> Glide down the Stream of Knowledge, and behold
> Its waters with a musing stillness glass
> The thousand hues of Nature and of Heaven.
>
> *Eugene Aram* (a MS. Tragedy).

The earl continued with the party he had joined; and when their occupation was concluded, and they turned homeward, he accepted the squire's frank invitation to partake of some refreshment at the manor-house. It so chanced, or perhaps the earl so contrived it, that Aram and himself, in their way to the village, lingered a little behind the rest, and that their conversation was thus, for a few minutes, not altogether general.

"Is it I, Mr. Aram," said the earl, smiling, "or is it Fate that has made you a convert? The last time we sagely and quietly conferred together, you contended that the more the circle of existence was contracted, the more we clung to a state of pure and all self-dependent intellect, the greater our chance of happiness. Thus you denied that we were rendered happier by our luxuries, by our ambition, or by our affections. Love and its ties were banished from your solitary Utopia, and you asserted that the true wisdom of life lay solely in the cultivation, not of our feelings, but our faculties. You know I held a different doctrine; and it is with the natural triumph of a hostile partisan that I hear you are about to relinquish the practice of one of your dogmas,—in consequence, may I hope, of having forsworn the theory?"

"Not so, my lord," answered Aram, coloring slightly; "my weakness only proves that my theory is difficult,—not that it is wrong. I still venture to think it true. More pain than pleasure is occasioned us by others: banish others, and you are necessarily the gainer. Mental activity and moral quietude are the two states which, were they perfected and united, would blend into happiness. It is such a union which constitutes all we imagine of heaven, or conceive of the majestic felicity of a God."

"Yet while you are on earth you will be, believe me, happier in the state you are about to choose," said the earl. "Who could look at that enchanting face," the speaker directed his eyes towards Madeline, "and not feel that it gave a pledge of happiness that could not be broken?"

It was not in the nature of Aram to like any allusion to himself, and still less to his affections; he turned aside his head, and remained silent. The wary earl discovered his indiscretion immediately.

"But let us put aside individual cases," said he,—"the *meum* and the *tuum* forbid all general argument,—and confess that there is for the majority of human beings a greater happiness in love than in the sublime state of passionless intellect to which you would so chillingly exalt us. Has not Cicero said, wisely, that we ought no more to subject too slavishly our

affections than to elevate them too imperiously into our masters? *Neque se nimium erigere, nec subjacere serviliter.*"

"Cicero loved philosophizing better than philosophy," said Aram, coldly. "But surely, my lord, the affections give us pain as well as pleasure? The doubt, the dread, the restlessness of love,—surely these prevent the passion from constituting a happy state of mind? To me, one knowledge alone seems sufficient to embitter all its enjoyments,—the knowledge that the object beloved must die. What a perpetuity of fear that knowledge creates! The avalanche that may crush us depends upon a single breath."

"Is not that too refined a sentiment? Custom surely blunts us to every chance, every danger, that may happen to us hourly. Were the avalanche over you for a day, I grant your state of torture; but had an avalanche rested over you for years, and not yet fallen, you would forget that it could ever fall,—you would eat, sleep, and make love as if it were not."

"Ha! my lord, you say well, you say well," said Aram, with a marked change of countenance; and quickening his pace, he joined Lester's side, and the thread of the previous conversation was broken off.

The earl afterwards, in walking through the garden (an excursion which he proposed himself, for he was somewhat of an horticulturist), took an opportunity to renew the subject.

"You will pardon me," said he, "but I cannot convince myself that man would be happier were he without emotions, and that to enjoy life he should be solely dependent on himself."

"Yet it seems to me," said Aram, "a truth easy of proof. If we love, we place our happiness in others. The moment we place our happiness in others, comes uncertainty; but uncertainty is the bane of happiness. Children are the source of anxiety to their parents; his mistress to the lover. Change, accident, death, all menace us in each person whom we regard. Every new affection opens new channels by which grief can invade us,—but, you will say, by which joy also can flow in: granted. But in human life is there not more grief than joy? What is it that renders the balance even? What makes the

staple of our happiness,—endearing to us the life at which we should otherwise repine? It is the mere passive, yet stirring, consciousness of life itself; of the sun and the air; of the physical being: but this consciousness every emotion disturbs. Yet could you add to its tranquillity an excitement that never exhausts itself, that becomes refreshed, not sated, with every new possession, then you would obtain happiness. There is only one excitement of this divine order,—that of intellectual culture. Behold now my theory! Examine it,—it contains no flaw. But if," renewed Aram, after a pause, "a man is subject to fate solely in himself, not in others, he soon hardens his mind against all fear, and prepares it for all events. A little philosophy enables him to bear bodily pain or the common infirmities of flesh; by a philosophy somewhat deeper he can conquer the ordinary reverses of fortune, the dread of shame, and the last calamity of death. But what philosophy could ever thoroughly console him for the ingratitude of a friend, the worthlessness of a child, the death of a mistress? Hence, only when he stands alone can a man's soul say to Fate, 'I defy thee.'"

"You think, then," said the earl, reluctantly diverting the conversation into a new channel, "that in the pursuit of knowledge lies our only *active* road to *real* happiness? Yet here how eternal must be the disappointments even of the most successful! Does not Boyle tell us of a man who, after devoting his whole life to the study of one mineral, confessed himself, at last, ignorant of all its properties?"

"Had the object of his study been himself, and not the mineral, he would not have been so unsuccessful a student," said Aram, smiling. "Yet," added he, in a graver tone, "we do indeed cleave the vast heaven of Truth with a weak and crippled wing, and often we are appalled in our way by a dread sense of the immensity around us, and of the inadequacy of our own strength. But there is a rapture in the breath of the pure and difficult air, and in the progress by which we compass earth, the while we draw nearer to the stars, that again exalts us beyond ourselves, and reconciles the true student unto all things, even to the hardest of them all,—the

conviction how feebly our performance can ever imitate the grandeur of our ambition! As you see the spark fly upward, — sometimes not falling to earth till it be dark and quenched, — thus soars, whither it recks not, so that the direction be *above*, the luminous spirit of him who aspires to Truth; nor will it back to the vile and heavy clay from which it sprang until the light which bore it upward be no more!"

CHAPTER IV.

A DEEPER EXAMINATION INTO THE STUDENT'S HEART.— THE VISIT TO THE CASTLE.— PHILOSOPHY PUT TO THE TRIAL.

I WEIGH not Fortune's frown or smile,
I joy not much in earthly joys;
I seek not state, I seek not style,
I am not fond of Fancy's toys:
I rest so pleased with what I have,
I wish no more, no more I crave.

JOSHUA SYLVESTER.

THE reader will pardon me if I somewhat clog his interest in my tale by the didactic character of brief conversations I have just given, and which I am compelled to renew. It is not only the history of his life, but the character and tone of Aram's mind, that I wish to stamp upon my page. Fortunately, however, the path my story assumes is of such a nature that in order to effect this object I shall never have to desert, and scarcely again even to linger by, the way.

Every one knows the magnificent moral of Goethe's "Faust." Every one knows that sublime discontent, that chafing at the bounds of human knowledge, that yearning for the intellectual Paradise beyond, which "the sworded angel" forbids us to approach, that daring yet sorrowful state of mind, that sense of defeat even in conquest, which Goethe has embodied, — a picture of the loftiest grief of which the soul is capable, and which may remind us of the profound and august melan-

choly which the Great Sculptor breathed into the repose of the noblest of mythological heroes when he represented the god resting after his labors, as if more convinced of their vanity than elated with their extent.

In this portrait, the grandeur of which the wild scenes that follow in the drama we refer to, do not — strangely wonderful as they are — perhaps altogether sustain, Goethe has bequeathed to the gaze of a calmer and more practical posterity the burning and restless spirit, — the feverish desire for knowledge more vague than useful, which characterized the exact epoch in the intellectual history of Germany in which the poem was inspired and produced.

At these bitter waters, the Marah of the streams of Wisdom, the soul of the man whom we have made the hero of these pages had also, and not lightly, quaffed. The properties of a mind more calm and stern than belonged to the visionaries of the Hartz and the Danube might indeed have preserved him from that thirst for the Impossible which gives so peculiar a romance, not only to the poetry, but the philosophy, of the German people. But if he rejected the superstitions, he did not also reject the bewilderments, of the mind. He loved to plunge into the dark and metaphysical subtleties which human genius has called daringly forth from the realities of things, —

> "To spin
> A shroud of *thought*, to hide him from the sun
> Of this familiar life which seems to be,
> But is not, or is but quaint mockery
> Of all we would believe; or sadly blame
> The jarring and inexplicable frame
> Of this wrong world, and then anatomize
> The purposes and thoughts of man, whose eyes
> Were closed in distant years; or widely guess
> The issue of the earth's great business
> When we shall be, as we no longer are,
> Like babbling gossips, safe, who hear the war
> Of winds, and sigh, but tremble not!"

Much in him was a type, or rather forerunner, of the intellectual spirit that broke forth among our countrymen when *we*

were children, and is now slowly dying away amidst the loud events and absorbing struggles of the awakening world. But in one respect he stood aloof from all his tribe,—in his hard indifference to worldly ambition and his contempt of fame. As some sages have considered the universe a dream, and self the only *reality*, so in his austere and collected reliance upon his own mind,—the gathering in, as it were, of his resources,—he appeared to regard the pomps of the world as shadows, and the life of his own spirit the only substance. He had built a city and a tower within the Shinar of his own heart, whence he might look forth, unscathed and unmoved, upon the deluge that broke over the rest of earth.

Only in one instance, and that, as we have seen, after much struggle, he had given way to the emotions that agitate his kind, and had surrendered himself to the dominion of another. This was against his theories,—but what theories ever resist love? In yielding, however, thus far, he seemed more on his guard than ever against a broader encroachment. He had admitted one "fair spirit" for his "minister," but it was only with a deeper fervor to invoke "the desert" as "his dwelling-place." Thus when the earl,—who, like most practical judges of mankind, loved to apply to each individual the motives that actuate the mass, and who only unwillingly, and somewhat sceptically, assented to the exceptions, and was driven to search for peculiar clews to the eccentric instance,—finding, to his secret triumph, that Aram had admitted one intruding emotion into his boasted circle of indifference, imagined that he should easily induce him (the spell once broken) to receive another, he was surprised and puzzled to discover himself in the wrong.

Lord —— at that time had been lately called into the Administration, and he was especially anxious to secure the support of all the talent that he could enlist on his behalf. The times were those in which party ran high, and in which individual political writings were honored with an importance which the periodical press in general has now almost wholly monopolized. On the side opposed to Government, writers of great name and high attainments had shone with peculiar

effect, and the earl was naturally desirous that they should be opposed by an equal array of intellect on the side espoused by himself. The name alone of Eugene Aram, at a day when scholarship was renown, would have been no ordinary acquisition to the cause of the earl's party; but that judicious and penetrating nobleman perceived that Aram's abilities, his various research, his extended views, his facility of argument, and the heat and energy of his eloquence, might be rendered of an importance which could not have been anticipated from the name alone, however eminent, of a retired and sedentary scholar. He was not, therefore, without an interested motive in the attentions he now lavished upon the student, and in his curiosity to put to the proof the disdain of all worldly enterprise and worldly temptation which Aram affected. He could not but think that, to a man poor and lowly of circumstance, conscious of superior acquirements, about to increase his wants by admitting to them a partner, and arrived at that age when the calculations of interest and the whispers of ambition have usually most weight,—he could not but think that to such a man the dazzling prospects of social advancement, the hope of the high fortunes and the powerful and glittering influence which political life in England offers to the aspirant, might be rendered altogether irresistible.

He took several opportunities, in the course of the next week, of renewing his conversation with Aram, and of artfully turning it into the channels which he thought most likely to produce the impression he desired to create. He was somewhat baffled, but by no means dispirited, in his attempts; but he resolved to defer his ultimate proposition until it could be made to the fullest advantage. He had engaged the Lesters to promise to pass a day at the castle; and with great difficulty, and at the earnest intercession of Madeline, Aram was prevailed upon to accompany them. So extreme was his distaste to general society, and, from some motive or another more powerful than mere constitutional reserve, so invariably had he for years refused all temptations to enter it, that, natural as this concession was rendered by his approaching marriage to one of the party, it filled him with a sort of terror

and foreboding of evil. It was as if he were passing beyond the boundary of some law on which the very tenure of his existence depended. After he had consented, a trembling came over him, he hastily left the room, and, till the day arrived, was observed by his friends of the manor-house to be more gloomy and abstracted than they ever had known him, even at the earliest period of acquaintance.

On the day itself, as they proceeded to the castle, Madeline perceived, with a tearful repentance of her interference, that he sat by her side cold and rapt, and that once or twice, when his eyes dwelt upon her, it was with an expression of reproach and distrust.

It was not till they entered the lofty hall of the castle, when a vulgar diffidence would have been most abashed, that Aram recovered himself. The earl was standing, the centre of a group in the recess of a window in the saloon, opening upon an extensive and stately terrace. He came forward to receive them with the polished and warm kindness which he bestowed upon all his inferiors in rank. He complimented the sisters, he jested with Lester; but to Aram only he manifested less the courtesy of kindness than of respect. He took his arm, and leaning on it with a light touch, led him to the group at the window. It was composed of the most distinguished public men in the country, and among them (the earl himself was connected, through an illegitimate branch, with the reigning monarch) was a prince of the blood royal.

To these, whom he had prepared for the introduction, he severally, and with an easy grace, presented Aram; and then falling back a few steps, he watched, with a keen but seemingly careless eye, the effect which so sudden a contact with royalty itself would produce on the mind of the shy and secluded student whom it was his object to dazzle and overpower. It was at this moment that the native dignity of Aram, which his studies, unworldly as they were, had certainly tended to increase, displayed itself, in a trial which, poor as it was in abstract theory, was far from despicable in the eyes of the sensible and practised courtier. He received with his usual modesty, but not with his usual shrinking and

embarrassment on such occasions, the compliments he received; a certain and far from ungraceful pride was mingled with his simplicity of demeanor; no *fluttering* of manner betrayed that he was either dazzled or humbled by the presence in which he stood; and the earl could not but confess that there was never a more favorable opportunity for comparing the aristocracy of genius with that of birth,—it was one of those homely, every-day triumphs of intellect which please us more than they ought to do, for, after all, they are more common than the men of courts are willing to believe.

Lord —— did not, however, long leave Aram to the support of his own unassisted presence of mind and calmness of nerve; he advanced, and led the conversation, with his usual tact, into a course which might at once please Aram and afford him the opportunity to shine. The earl had imported from Italy some of the most beautiful specimens of classic sculpture which this country now possesses. These were disposed in niches around the magnificent apartment in which the guests were assembled; and as the earl pointed them out, and illustrated each from the beautiful anecdotes and golden allusions of antiquity, he felt that he was affording to Aram a gratification he could never have experienced before, and in the expression of which the grace and copiousness of his learning would find vent. Nor was he disappointed. The cheek, which till then had retained its steady paleness, now caught the glow of enthusiasm; and in a few moments there was not a person in the group who did not feel, and cheerfully feel, the superiority of the one who, in birth and fortune, was immeasurably the lowest of all.

The English aristocracy, whatever be the faults of their education, have at least the merit of being alive to the possession, and easily warmed to the possessor, of classical attainments, —perhaps too much so; for they are thus apt to judge all talent by a classical standard, and all theory by classical experience. Without—save in very rare instances—the right to boast of any deep learning, they are far more susceptible than the nobility of any other nation to the *spiritum Camœnæ*. They are easily and willingly charmed back to the studies

which, if not eagerly pursued in their youth, are still entwined with all their youth's brightest recollections, the schoolboy's prize, and the master's praise, the first ambition, and its first reward. A felicitous quotation, a delicate allusion, are never lost upon their ear; and the veneration which at Eton they bore to the best verse-maker in the school, tinctures their judgment of others throughout life, mixing I know not what, both of liking and esteem, with their admiration of one who uses his classical weapons with a scholar's dexterity, not a pedant's inaptitude: for such a one there is a sort of agreeable confusion in their respect; they are inclined, unconsciously, to believe that he must necessarily be a high gentleman,—ay, and something of a good fellow into the bargain.

It happened, then, that Aram could not have dwelt upon a theme more likely to arrest the spontaneous interest of those with whom he now conversed,—men themselves of more cultivated minds than usual, and more capable than most (from that acute perception of real talent which is produced by habitual political warfare) of appreciating not only his endowments, but his facility in applying them.

"You are right, my lord," said Sir ——, the whipper-in of the —— party, taking the earl aside; "he would be an inestimable pamphleteer."

"Could you get him to write us a sketch of the state of parties, — luminous, eloquent?" whispered a lord of the bed-chamber.

The earl answered by a *bon mot*, and turned to a bust of Caracalla.

The hours at that time were (in the country, at least) not late, and the earl was one of the first introducers of the polished fashion of France by which we testify a preference of the society of the women to that of our own sex; so that in leaving the dining-room, it was not so late but that the greater part of the guests walked out upon the terrace and admired the expanse of country which it overlooked, and along which the thin veil of the twilight began now to hover.

Having safely deposited his royal guest at a whist-table, and thus left himself a free agent, the earl, inviting Aram to

join him, sauntered among the loiterers on the terrace for a few moments, and then descended a broad flight of steps which brought them into a more shaded and retired walk, on either side of which rows of orange-trees gave forth their fragrance, while, to the right, sudden and numerous vistas were cut amidst the more regular and dense foliage, affording glimpses, now of some rustic statue, now of some lonely temple, now of some quaint fountain, on the play of whose waters the first stars had begun to tremble.

It was one of those magnificent gardens, modelled from the stately glories of Versailles, which it is now the mode to decry, but which breathe so unequivocally of the palace. I grant that they deck Nature with somewhat too prolix a grace; but is Beauty always best seen *en déshabillé?* And with what associations of the brightest traditions connected with Nature they link her more luxuriant loveliness! Must we breathe only the malaria of Rome to be capable of feeling the interest attached to the fountain or the statue?

"I am glad," said the earl, "that you admired my bust of Cicero,—it is from an original very lately discovered. What grandeur in the brow; what energy in the mouth and downward bend of the head! It is pleasant even to imagine we gaze upon the likeness of so bright a spirit. And confess, at least of Cicero, that in reading the aspirations and outpourings of his mind you have felt your apathy to fame melting away, you have shared the desire to live in the future age,—'the longing after immortality'!"

"Was it not that longing," replied Aram, "which gave to the character of Cicero its poorest and most frivolous infirmity? Has it not made him, glorious as he is despite of it, a by-word in the mouth of every schoolboy? Whenever you mention his genius, do you not hear an appendix on his vanity?"

"Yet without that vanity, that desire for a name with posterity, would he have been equally great, would he equally have cultivated his genius?"

"Probably, my lord, he would not have equally cultivated his genius, but in reality he might have been equally great.

A man often injures his mind by the means that increase his genius. You think this, my lord, a paradox; but examine it. How many men of genius have been but ordinary men, take them from the particular objects in which they shine! Why is this, but that in cultivating one branch of intellect they neglect the rest? Nay, the very torpor of the reasoning faculty has often kindled the imaginative. Lucretius is said to have composed his sublime poem under the influence of a delirium. The susceptibilities that we create or refine by the pursuit of one object weaken our general reason; and I may compare, with some justice, the powers of the mind to the faculties of the body, in which squinting is occasioned by an inequality of strength in the eyes, and discordance of voice by the same inequality in the ears."

"I believe you are right," said the earl; "yet I own I willingly forgive Cicero for his vanity, if it contributed to the production of his orations and his essays. And he is a greater man, even with his vanity unconquered, than if he had conquered his foible, and, in doing so, taken away the incitements to his genius."

"A greater man in the world's eye, my lord, but scarcely in reality. Had Homer written his Iliad and then burned it, would his genius have been less? The world would have known nothing of him; but would he have been a less extraordinary man on that account? We are too apt, my lord, to confound greatness and fame.

"There is one circumstance," added Aram, after a pause, "that should diminish our respect for renown. Errors of life, as well as foibles of character, are often the real enhancers of celebrity. Without his errors, I doubt whether Henri Quatre would have become the idol of a people. How many Whartons has the world known, who, deprived of their frailties, had been inglorious! The light that you so admire reaches you only through the distance of time, on account of the angles and unevenness of the body whence it emanates. Were the surface of the moon smooth, it would be invisible."

"I admire your illustrations," said the earl, "but I reluc-

tantly submit to your reasonings. You would then neglect your powers, lest they should lead you into errors?"

"Pardon me, my lord; it is because I think *all* the powers should be cultivated, that I quarrel with the exclusive cultivation of one. And it is only because I would strengthen the whole mind that I dissent from the reasonings of those who tell you to consult your genius."

"But your genius may serve mankind more than this general cultivation of intellect?"

"My lord," replied Aram, with a mournful cloud upon his countenance, "that argument may have weight with those who think mankind *can* be effectually served, though they may be often dazzled, by the labors of an individual. But, indeed, this perpetual talk of 'mankind' signifies nothing; each of us consults his proper happiness, and we consider him a madman who ruins his own peace of mind by an everlasting fretfulness of philanthropy."

This was a doctrine that half pleased, half displeased the earl: it shadowed forth the most dangerous notions which Aram entertained.

"Well, well," said the noble host, as, after a short contest on the ground of his guest's last remark, they left off where they began, "let us drop these general discussions: I have a particular proposition to unfold. We have, I trust, Mr. Aram, seen enough of each other to feel that we can lay a sure foundation for mutual esteem. For my part, I own frankly that I have never met with one who has inspired me with a sincerer admiration. I am desirous that your talents and great learning should be known in the widest sphere. You may despise fame, but you must permit your friends the weakness to wish *you* justice, and themselves triumph. You know my post in the present Administration. The place of my secretary is one of great trust, some influence, and fair emolument; I offer it to you. Accept it, and you will confer upon me an honor and an obligation. You will have your own separate house or apartments in mine, solely appropriated to your use; your privacy will never be disturbed. Every arrangement shall be made for yourself and your bride that

either of you can suggest. Leisure for your own pursuits you will have, too, in abundance; there are others who will perform all that is toilsome in the mere details of your office. In London you will see around you the most eminent living men of all nations and in all pursuits. If you contract (which, believe me, is possible,—it is a tempting game!) any inclination towards public life, you will have the most brilliant opportunities afforded you, and I foretell you the most signal success. Stay yet one moment: for this you will owe me no thanks. Were I not sensible that I consult my own interests in this proposal, I should be courtier enough to suppress it."

"My lord," said Aram, in a voice which, in spite of its calmness, betrayed that he was affected, "it seldom happens to a man of my secluded habits and lowly pursuits to have the philosophy he affects put to so severe a trial. I am grateful to you, deeply grateful, for an offer so munificent, so undeserved; I am yet more grateful that it allows me to sound the strength of my own heart, and to find that I did not too highly rate it. Look, my lord, from the spot where we now stand;" the moon had risen, and they had now returned to the terrace; "in the vale below, and far among those trees, lies my home. More than two years ago I came thither to fix the resting-place of a sad and troubled spirit. There have I centred all my wishes and my hopes; and there may I breathe my last! My lord, you will not think me ungrateful that my choice is made, and you will not blame my motive, though you may despise my wisdom."

"But," said the earl, astonished, "you cannot foresee all the advantages you would renounce? At your age, with your intellect, to choose the living sepulchre of a hermitage! It was wise to *reconcile* yourself to it, but it is not wise to *prefer* it! Nay, nay, consider, pause; I am in no haste for your decision. And what advantages have you in your retreat that you will not possess in a greater degree with me? Quiet?—I pledge it to you under my roof. Solitude?—you shall have it at your will. Books?—what are those which you, which any individual may possess, to the public institutions, the

magnificent collections, of the metropolis? What else is it you enjoy yonder, and cannot enjoy with me?"

"Liberty!" said Aram, energetically. "Liberty, the wild sense of independence! Could I exchange the lonely stars and the free air for the poor lights and feverish atmosphere of worldly life? Could I surrender my mood, with its thousand eccentricities and humors, its cloud and shadow, to the eyes of strangers, or veil it from their gaze by the irksomeness of an eternal hypocrisy? No, my lord; I am too old to turn disciple to the world. You promise me solitude and quiet. What charm would they have for me if I felt they were held from the generosity of another? The attraction of solitude is only in its independence. You offer me the circle, but not the magic which made it holy. Books! *They*, years since, would have tempted me; but those whose wisdom I have already drained, have taught me now almost enough: and the two books whose interest can never be exhausted,—Nature and my own heart,—will suffice for the rest of life. My lord, I require no time for consideration."

"And you positively refuse me?"

"Gratefully refuse you."

The earl peevishly walked away for one moment; but it was not in his nature to lose himself for more.

"Mr. Aram," said he, frankly, and holding out his hand, "you have chosen nobly, if not wisely; and though I cannot forgive you for depriving me of such a companion, I thank you for teaching me such a lesson. Henceforth I will believe that philosophy may exist in practice, and that a contempt for wealth and for honors is not the mere profession of discontent. This is the first time, in a various and experienced life, that I have found a man sincerely deaf to the temptations of the world,—and that man of such endowments! If ever you see cause to alter a theory that I still think erroneous, though lofty, remember me; and at all times and on all occasions," he added, with a smile, "when a friend becomes a necessary evil, call to mind our starlight walk on the castle terrace."

Aram did not mention to Lester, or even Madeline, the

above conversation. The whole of the next day he shut himself up at home; and when he again appeared at the manor-house he heard, with evident satisfaction, that the earl had been suddenly summoned on state affairs to London.

There was an unaccountable soreness in Aram's mind which made him feel a resentment, a suspicion, against all who sought to lure him from his retreat. "Thank Heaven!" thought he, when he heard of the earl's departure, "we shall not meet for another year!" He was mistaken. *Another year!*

CHAPTER V.

IN WHICH THE STORY RETURNS TO WALTER AND THE CORPORAL.—THE RENCONTRE WITH A STRANGER, AND HOW THE STRANGER PROVES TO BE NOT ALTOGETHER A STRANGER.

BEING got out of town in the road to Penaflor, master of my own action and forty good ducats, the first thing I did was to give my mule her head and to go at what pace she pleased.

. . . . . .

I left them in the inn and continued my journey; I was hardly got half a mile farther when I met a cavalier very genteel, etc. — *Gil Blas.*

IT was broad and sunny noon on the second day of their journey as Walter Lester and the valorous attendant with whom it had pleased Fate to endow him rode slowly into a small town in which the corporal, in his own heart, had resolved to bait his Roman-nosed horse and refresh himself. Two comely inns had the younger traveller of the two already passed with an indifferent air, as if neither bait nor refreshment made any part of the necessary concerns of this habitable world. And in passing each of the said hostelries, the Roman-nosed horse had uttered a snort of indignant surprise, and the worthy corporal had responded to the quadrupedal remonstrance by a loud "hem!" It seemed, however, that Walter heard neither of the above significant admonitions; and now the town was nearly passed, and a steep hill, that

seemed winding away into eternity, already presented itself to the rueful gaze of the corporal.

"The boy 's clean mad!" grunted Bunting to himself. "Must do my duty to him,—give him a hint."

Pursuant to this notable and conscientious determination, Bunting jogged his horse into a trot; and coming alongside of Walter, put his hand to his hat and said,—

"Weather warm, your honor; horses knocked up; next town as far as hell! Halt a bit here, augh!"

"Ha! that is very true, Bunting; I had quite forgotten the length of our journey. But see, there is a sign-post yonder; we will take advantage of it."

"Augh! and your honor 's right,—fit for the Forty-second," said the corporal, falling back; and in a few moments he and his charger found themselves, to their mutual delight, entering the yard of a small but comfortable-looking inn.

The host, a man of a capacious stomach and a rosy cheek,—in short, a host whom your heart warms to see,—stepped forth immediately, held the stirrup for the young squire (for the corporal's movements were too stately to be rapid), and ushered him, with a bow, a smile, and a flourish of his napkin, into one of those little quaint rooms, with cupboards bright with high glasses and old china, that it pleases us still to find extant in the old-fashioned inns in our remoter roads and less Londonized districts.

Mine host was an honest fellow and not above his profession; he stirred the fire, dusted the table, brought the bill of fare and a newspaper seven days old, and then bustled away to order the dinner and chat with the corporal. That accomplished hero had already thrown the stables into commotion; and frightening the two hostlers from their attendance on the steeds of more peaceable men, had set them both at leading his own horse and his master's to and fro the yard, to be cooled into comfort and appetite.

He was now busy in the kitchen, where he had seized the reins of government, sent the scullion to see if the hens had laid any fresh eggs, and drawn upon himself the objurgations of a very thin cook with a squint.

"Tell you, ma'am, you are wrong, quite wrong; seen the world, old soldier, and know how to fry eggs better than any she in the three kingdoms. Hold jaw; mind your own business. Where 's the frying-pan? Baugh!"

So completely did the corporal feel himself in his element while he was putting everybody else out of the way, and so comfortable did he find his new quarters, that he resolved that the "bait" should be at all events prolonged until his good cheer had been deliberately digested and his customary pipe duly enjoyed.

Accordingly,—but not till Walter had dined; for our man of the world knew that it is the tendency of that meal to abate our activity, while it increases our good-humor,—the corporal presented himself to his master, with a grave countenance.

"Greatly vexed, your honor,—who 'd have thought it? But those large animals are bad on long march."

"Why, what 's the matter now, Bunting?"

"Only, sir, that the brown horse is so done up that I think it would be as much as life 's worth to go any farther for several hours."

"Very well; and if I propose staying here till the evening? We have ridden far, and are in no great hurry."

"To be sure not,—sure and certain not," cried the corporal. "Ah, master, you know how to command, I see! Nothing like discretion,—discretion, sir, is a jewel. Sir, it is more than a jewel,—it 's a pair of stirrups!"

"A what, Bunting?"

"Pair of stirrups, your honor. Stirrups help us to get on, so does discretion; to get off, ditto discretion. Men without stirrups look fine, ride bold, tire soon; men without discretion cut dash, but knock up all of a crack. Stirrups— But what signifies? Could say much more, your honor, but don't love chatter."

"Your simile is ingenious enough, if not poetical," said Walter; "but it does not hold good to the last. When a man falls, his discretion should preserve him; but he is often dragged in the mud by his stirrups."

"Beg pardon, you 're wrong," quoth the corporal, nothing taken by surprise; "spoke of the newfangled stirrups that open, crank, when we fall, and let us out of the scrape." [1]

Satisfied with this repartee, the corporal now (like an experienced jester) withdrew to leave its full effect on the admiration of his master. A little before sunset the two travellers renewed their journey.

"I have loaded the pistols, sir," said the corporal, pointing to the holsters on Walter's saddle. "It is eighteen miles off to the next town,—will be dark long before we get there."

"You did very right, Bunting; though I suppose there is not much danger to be apprehended from the gentlemen of the highway."

"Why, the landlord do say the revarse, your honor,—been many robberies in these here parts."

"Well, we are fairly mounted, and you are a formidable-looking fellow, Bunting."

"Oh! your honor," quoth the corporal, turning his head stiffly away, with a modest simper, "you makes me blush,—though, indeed, bating that I have the military air, and am more in the prime of life, your honor is wellnigh as awkward a gentleman as myself to come across."

"Much obliged for the compliment!" said Walter, pushing his horse a little forward. The corporal took the hint and fell back.

It was now that beautiful hour of twilight when lovers grow especially tender. The young traveller every instant threw his dark eyes upward, and thought—not of Madeline, but her sister. The corporal himself grew pensive, and in a few moments his whole soul was absorbed in contemplating the forlorn state of the abandoned Jacobina.

In this melancholy and silent mood they proceeded onward till the shades began to deepen; and by the light of the first stars Walter beheld a small, spare gentleman riding before him on an ambling nag with cropped ears and mane. The rider, as he now came up to him, seemed to have passed the

[1] Of course the corporal does not speak of the patent stirrup; *that* would be an anachronism.

grand climacteric, but looked hale and vigorous; and there was a certain air of staid and sober aristocracy about him which involuntarily begat your respect.

He looked hard at Walter as the latter approached, and still more hard at the corporal. He seemed satisfied with the survey.

"Sir," said he, slightly touching his hat to Walter, and with an agreeable though rather sharp intonation of voice, "I am very glad to see a gentleman of your appearance travelling my road. Might I request the honor of being allowed to join you so far as you go? To say the truth, I am a little afraid of encountering those industrious gentlemen who have been lately somewhat notorious in these parts; and it may be better for all of us to ride in as strong a party as possible."

"Sir," replied Walter, eying in his turn the speaker, and in his turn also feeling satisfied with the scrutiny, "I am going to ——, where I shall pass the night on my way to town, and shall be very happy in your company."

The corporal uttered a loud "hem!" That penetrating man of the world was not too well pleased with the advances of a stranger.

"What fools them boys be!" thought he, very discontentedly. "Howsomever, the man does seem like a decent country gentleman, and we are two to one; besides, he 's old, little, and, augh, baugh, I dare say we are safe enough for all that *he* can do."

The stranger possessed a polished and well-bred demeanor, he talked freely and copiously, and his conversation was that of a shrewd and cultivated man. He informed Walter that not only the roads had been infested by those more daring riders common at that day, and to whose merits we ourselves have endeavored to do justice in a former work of blessed memory, but that several houses had been lately attempted, and two absolutely plundered.

"For myself," he added, "I have no money to signify about my person; my watch is only valuable to me for the time it has been in my possession; and if the rogues robbed one civilly, I should not so much mind encountering them: but they

are a desperate set, and use violence when there is nothing to be got by it. Have you travelled far to-day, sir?"

"Some six or seven and twenty miles," replied Walter. "I am proceeding to London, and not willing to distress my horses by too rapid a journey."

"Very right, very good; and horses, sir, are not now what they used to be when I was a young man. Ah, what wagers I used to win then! Horses galloped, sir, when I was twenty; they trotted when I was thirty-five: but they only amble now. Sir, if it does not tax your patience too severely, let us give our nags some hay and water at the half-way house yonder."

Walter assented. They stopped at a little solitary inn by the side of the road, and the host came out with great obsequiousness when he heard the voice of Walter's companion.

"Ah, Sir Peter!" said he. "And how be'st your honor? Fine night, Sir Peter; hope you'll get home safe, Sir Peter."

"Safe, ay! indeed, Jock, I hope so too. Has all been quiet here this last night or two?"

"Whish, sir!" whispered my host, jerking his thumb back towards the house; "there be two ugly customers within I does not know: they have got famous good horses, and are drinking hard. I can't say as I knows anything agen 'em, but I think your honors had better be jogging."

"Aha! thank ye, Jock, thank ye. Never mind the hay now," said Sir Peter, pulling away the reluctant mouth of his nag; and turning to Walter, "Come, sir, let us move on. Why, zounds! where is that servant of yours?"

Walter now perceived, with great vexation, that the corporal had disappeared within the alehouse; and looking through the casement, on which the ruddy light of the fire played cheerily, he saw the man of the world lifting a little measure of "the pure creature" to his lips; and close by the hearth, at a small round table, covered with glasses, pipes, etc., he beheld two men eying the tall corporal very wistfully, and of no prepossessing appearance themselves. One, indeed, as the fire played full on his countenance, was a person of singularly rugged and sinister features; and this man, he now remarked,

was addressing himself with a grim smile to the corporal, who, setting down his little "noggin," regarded him with a stare which appeared to Walter to denote recognition. This survey was the operation of a moment, for Sir Peter took it upon himself to despatch the landlord into the house to order forth the unseasonable carouser, and presently the corporal stalked out; and having solemnly remounted, the whole trio set onwards in a brisk trot. As soon as they were without sight of the alehouse, the corporal brought the aquiline profile of his gaunt steed on a level with his master's horse.

"Augh, sir!" said he, with more than his usual energy of utterance, "I see'd him!"

"Him! whom?"

"Man with ugly face what drank at Peter Dealtry's and went to Master Aram's. Knew him in a crack; sure he's a Tartar!"

"What! does your servant recognize one of those suspicious fellows whom Jock warned us against?" cried Sir Peter, pricking up his ears.

"So it seems, sir," said Walter; "he saw him once before, many miles hence. But I fancy he knows nothing really to his prejudice."

"Augh!" cried the corporal; "he's d—d ugly, anyhow!"

"That's a tall fellow of yours," said Sir Peter, jerking up his chin with that peculiar motion common to the brief in stature when they are covetous of elongation. "He looks military: has he been in the army? Ay, I thought so,—one of the King of Prussia's grenadiers, I suppose. Faith, I hear hoofs behind!"

"Hem!" cried the corporal, again coming alongside of his master. "Beg pardon, sir; served in the Forty-second; nothing like regular line; stragglers always cut off; had rather not straggle just now; enemy behind!"

Walter looked back and saw two men approaching them at a hand-gallop. "We are a match at least for them, sir," said he to his new acquaintance.

"I am devilish glad I met you," was Sir Peter's rather selfish reply.

"'T is he! 't is the devil!" grunted the corporal as the two men now gained their side and pulled up; and Walter recognized the faces he had remarked in the alehouse.

"Your servant, gentlemen," quoth the uglier of the two; "you ride fast—"

"And ready, bother, baugh!" chimed in the corporal, plucking a gigantic pistol from his holster without any further ceremony.

"Glad to hear it, sir!" said the hard-featured stranger, nothing dashed. "But I can tell *you* a secret."

"What 's that, augh?" said the corporal, cocking his pistol.

"Whoever hurts you, friend, cheats the gallows!" replied the stranger, laughing, and spurring on his horse, to be out of reach of any practical answer with which the corporal might favor him. But Bunting was a prudent man, and not apt to be choleric.

"Bother!" said he, and dropped his pistol, as the other stranger followed his ill-favored comrade.

"You see we are too strong for them!" cried Sir Peter, gayly. "Evidently highwaymen! How very fortunate that I should have fallen in with you!"

A shower of rain now began to fall. Sir Peter looked serious. He halted abruptly, unbuckled his cloak, which had been strapped before his saddle, wrapped himself up in it, buried his face in the collar, muffled his chin with a red handkerchief which he took out of his pocket, and then turning to Walter, he said to him, "What! no cloak, sir,—no wrapper even? Upon my soul I am very sorry I have not another handkerchief to lend you!"

"Man of the world, baugh!" grunted the corporal; and his heart quite warmed to the stranger he had at first taken for a robber.

"And now, sir," said Sir Peter, patting his nag and pulling up his cloak-collar still higher, "let us go gently: there is no occasion for hurry. Why distress our horses?"

"Really, sir," said Walter, smiling, "though I have a great regard for my horse, I have some for myself, and I should rather like to be out of this rain as soon as possible."

"Oh, ah! *you* have no cloak; I forgot that. To be sure, to be sure; let us trot on,—gently, though, gently. Well, sir, as I was saying, horses are not so swift as they were. The breed is bought up by the French! I remember once Johnny Courtland and I, after dining at my house till the champagne had played the dancing-master to our brains, mounted our horses and rode twenty miles for a cool thousand the winner. I lost it, sir, by a hair's-breadth; but I lost it on purpose: it would have half ruined Johnny Courtland to have paid me, and he had that delicacy, sir, he had that delicacy that he would not have suffered me to refuse taking his money; so what could I do but lose on purpose? You see I had no alternative."

"Pray, sir," said Walter, charmed and astonished at so rare an instance of the generosity of human friendships,—"pray, sir, did I not hear you called Sir Peter by the landlord of the little inn? Can it be, since you speak so familiarly of Mr. Courtland, that I have the honor to address Sir Peter Hales?"

"Indeed, *that* is my name," replied the gentleman, with some surprise in his voice. "But I have never had the honor of seeing you before."

"Perhaps my name is not unfamiliar to you," said Walter. "And among my papers I have a letter addressed to you from my uncle, Rowland Lester."

"God bless me!" cried Sir Peter. "What! Rowy? Well, indeed I am overjoyed to hear of him. So you are his nephew? Pray tell me all about him,—a wild, gay, rollicking fellow still, eh? Always fencing, sa-sa! or playing at billiards, or hot in a steeple-chase? There was not a jollier, better-humored fellow in the world than Rowy Lester."

"You forget, Sir Peter," said Walter, laughing at a description so unlike his sober and steady uncle, "that some years have passed since the time you speak of."

"Ah! and so there have," replied Sir Peter. "And what does your uncle say of *me?*"

"That when he knew you you were all generosity, frankness, hospitality."

"Humph, humph!" said Sir Peter, looking extremely disconcerted, — a confusion which Walter imputed solely to modesty. "I was a hairbrained, foolish fellow then, — quite a boy, quite a boy. But bless me, it rains sharply, and you have no cloak. But we are close on the town now. An excellent inn is the 'Duke of Cumberland's Head;' you will have charming accommodation there."

"What, Sir Peter, you know this part of the country well?"

"Pretty well, pretty well, — indeed I live near; that is to say, not *very* far from, the town. This turn, if you please. We separate here. I have brought you a little out of your way, — not above a mile or two, — for fear the robbers should attack me if I was left alone. I had quite forgot you had no cloak. That's your road, — this mine. Aha! so Rowy Lester is still alive and hearty? The same excellent wild fellow, no doubt. Give my kindest remembrance to him when you write. Adieu, sir!"

This latter speech having been delivered during a halt, the corporal had heard it; he grinned delightedly as he touched his hat to Sir Peter, who now trotted off, and muttered to his young master, —

"Most sensible man, that, sir!"

CHAPTER VI.

SIR PETER DISPLAYED.—ONE MAN OF THE WORLD SUFFERS FROM ANOTHER.—THE INCIDENT OF THE BRIDLE BEGETS THE INCIDENT OF THE SADDLE; THE INCIDENT OF THE SADDLE BEGETS THE INCIDENT OF THE WHIP; THE INCIDENT OF THE WHIP BEGETS WHAT THE READER MUST READ TO SEE.

NIHIL est aliud magnum quam multa minuta.[1] — *Vetus Auctor.*

"AND so," said Walter, the next morning, to the head-waiter, who was busied about their preparations for breakfast, "and so Sir Peter Hales, you say, lives within a mile of the town?"

"*Scarcely* a mile, sir (black, or green?); you passed the turn to his house last night. (Sir, the eggs are quite fresh this morning.) This inn belongs to Sir Peter."

"Oh! Does Sir Peter see much company?"

The waiter smiled.

"Sir Peter gives very handsome dinners, sir, twice a-year. A most clever gentleman, Sir Peter! They say he is the best manager of property in the whole county. Do you like Yorkshire cake? Toast? Yes, sir!"

"So, so," said Walter to himself; "a pretty true description my uncle gave me of this gentleman! 'Ask me too often to dinner, indeed!' 'offer me money if I want it!' 'spend a month at his house!' 'most hospitable fellow in the world!' My uncle must have been dreaming."

Walter had yet to learn that the men most prodigal when they have nothing but expectations are often most thrifty when they know the charms of absolute possession. Besides, Sir Peter had married a Scotch lady, and was blessed with

[1] "Nor is there anything that hath so great a power as the aggregate of small things."

eleven children! But was Sir Peter Hales much altered? Sir Peter Hales was exactly the same man in reality that he always had been. Once he was selfish in extravagance; he was now selfish in thrift. He had always pleased himself and forgot other people: that was exactly what he valued himself on doing now. But the most absurd thing about Sir Peter was that while he was forever extracting use from every one else, he was mightily afraid of being himself put to use. He was in Parliament, and noted for never giving a frank out of his own family. Yet, withal, Sir Peter Hales was still an agreeable fellow,—nay, he was more liked and much more esteemed than ever. There is something conciliatory in a saving disposition. But people put themselves in a great passion when a man is too liberal with his own; it is an insult on their own prudence. "What right has he to be so extravagant? What an example to our servants!" But your close neighbor does not humble you. You love your close neighbor; you respect your close neighbor; you have your harmless jest against him,—but he is a most respectable man.

"A letter, sir, and a parcel from Sir Peter Hales," said the waiter, entering.

The parcel was a bulky, angular, awkward packet of brown paper, sealed once and tied with the smallest possible quantity of string; it was addressed to Mr. James Holwell, Saddler, —— Street, ——. The letter was to —— Lester, Esq., and ran thus, written in a very neat, stiff Italian character:—

D^R S^R,—

I trust you had no difficulty in find^g ye Duke of Cumberland's Head; it is an excellent I^n.

I greatly reg^t y^t you are unavoid^y oblig'd to go on to Lond^n; for otherwise I sh^d have had the sincerest pleas^e in seeing you here at din^r & introducing you to Ld Hales. Anoth^r time I trust we may be more fortunate.

As you pass thro' ye litt^e town of ——, exactly 21 miles hence, on the road to Lond^n, will you do me the fav^r to allow your serv^t to put the little parcel I send into his pock^t & drop it as direct^d? It is a bridle I am forc'd to return. Country work^n are such bung^rs.

I sh^d most certain^y have had ye hon^r to wait on you person^y, but the

rain has given me a m^{e} sev^{e} cold. Hope you have escap'd, — tho', by y^{e} by, you had no cloak nor wrapp^{r}!

My kindest regards to your m^{o} excellent unc^{e}. I am sure he 's the same fine merr^{y} fell^{w} he always was! Tell him so!

D^{r} S^{r}, yours faith^{y}

PETER GRINDLESCREW HALES.

P. S. You know perh^{s} y^{t} poor Jno Court^{d}, your uncle's m^{o} intim^{e} friend, lives in ——, the town in which your serv^{t} will drop ye brid^{e}. He is much alter'd, poor Jno!

"Altered! Alteration then seems the fashion with my uncle's friends!" thought Walter as he rang for the corporal and consigned to his charge the unsightly parcel.

"It is to be carried twenty-one miles, at the request of the gentleman we met last night, — a most sensible man, Bunting!"

"Augh, waugh, your honor!" grunted the corporal, thrusting the bridle very discontentedly into his pocket, where it annoyed him the whole journey, by incessantly getting between his seat of leather and his seat of honor. It is a comfort to the inexperienced when one man of the world smarts from the sagacity of another; we resign ourselves more willingly to our fate. Our travellers resumed their journey, and in a few minutes, from the cause we have before assigned, the corporal became thoroughly out of humor.

"Pray, Bunting," said Walter, calling his attendant to his side, "do you feel sure that the man we met yesterday at the alehouse is the same you saw at Grassdale some months ago?"

"D—n it!" cried the corporal, quickly, and clapping his hand behind.

"How, sir!"

"Beg pardon, your honor, — slip tongue; but this confounded parcel! augh, bother!"

"Why don't you carry it in your hand?"

"'T is so ungainsome, and be d—d to it! And how can I hold parcel and pull in this beast, which requires two hands: his mouth 's as hard as a brickbat, augh!"

"You have not answered my question yet."

"Beg pardon, your honor. Yes, certain sure the man's the same; phiz not to be mistaken."

"It is strange," said Walter, musing, "that Aram should know a man who, if not a highwayman, as we suspected, is at least of rugged manner and disreputable appearance. It is strange, too, that Aram always avoided recurring to the acquaintance, though he confessed it." With this he broke into a trot, and the corporal into an oath.

They arrived by noon at the little town specified by Sir Peter, and in their way to the inn (for Walter resolved to rest there) passed by the saddler's house. It so chanced that Master Holwell was an adept in his craft, and that a newly invented hunting saddle at the window caught Walter's notice. The artful saddler persuaded the young traveller to dismount and look at "the most convenientest and handsomest saddle that ever was seen;" and the corporal having lost no time in getting rid of his encumbrance, Walter dismissed him to the inn with the horses, and after purchasing the saddle in exchange for his own, he sauntered into the shop to look at a new snaffle. A gentleman's servant was in the shop at the time, bargaining for a riding-whip; and the shopboy, among others, showed him a large old-fashioned one, with a tarnished silver handle. Grooms have no taste for antiquity, and in spite of the silver handle, the servant pushed it aside with some contempt. Some jest he uttered at the time chanced to attract Walter's notice to the whip; he took it up carelessly, and perceived, with great surprise, that it bore his own crest — a bittern — on the handle. He examined it now with attention; and underneath the crest were the letters G. L., his father's initials.

"How long have you had this whip?" said he to the saddler, concealing the emotion which this token of his lost parent naturally excited.

"Oh! a 'nation long time, sir," replied Mr. Holwell. "It is a queer old thing, but really is not amiss, if the silver was scrubbed up a bit and a new lash put on. You may have it a bargain, sir, if so be you have taken a fancy to it."

"Can you at all recollect how you came by it?" said Walter,

earnestly. "The fact is that I see by the crest and initials that it belonged to a person whom I have some interest in discovering."

"Why, let me think," said the saddler, scratching the tip of his right ear; "'t is so long ago sin' I had it, I quite forget how I came by it."

"Oh, is it that whip, John?" said the wife, who had been attracted from the back parlor by the sight of the handsome young stranger. "Don't you remember,—it's a many year ago,—a gentleman who passed a day with Squire Courtland, when he first came to settle here, called and left the whip to have a new thong put to it? But I fancies he forgot it, sir [turning to Walter], for he never called for it again; and the squire's people says as how he was gone into Yorkshire,—so there the whip's been ever sin'. I remembers it, sir, 'cause I kept it in the little parlor nearly a year, to be in the way like."

"Ah! I thinks I do remember it now," said Master Holwell. "I should think it's a matter of twelve yearn ago. I suppose I may sell it without fear of the gentleman's claiming it again."

"Not more than twelve years!" said Walter, anxiously; for it was some seventeen years since his father had been last heard of by his family.

"Why it may be thirteen, sir, or so, more or less; I can't say exactly."

"More likely fourteen!" said the dame. "It can't be much more, sir; we have only been a married fifteen year come next Christmas! But my old man here is ten years older nor I."

"And the gentleman, you say, was at Mr. Courtland's?"

"Yes, sir, that I'm sure of," replied the intelligent Mrs. Holwell; "they said he had come lately from Ingee."

Walter, now despairing of hearing more, purchased the whip; and blessing the worldly wisdom of Sir Peter Hales, that had thus thrown him on a clew, which, however slight, he resolved to follow up, he inquired the way to Squire Courtland's, and proceeded thither at once.

CHAPTER VII.

WALTER VISITS ANOTHER OF HIS UNCLE'S FRIENDS.—MR. COURTLAND'S STRANGE COMPLAINT.—WALTER LEARNS NEWS OF HIS FATHER WHICH SURPRISES HIM.—THE CHANGE IN HIS DESTINATION.

> GAD 's my life! did you ever hear the like? What a strange man is this! What you have possessed me withal, I 'll discharge it amply.
>
> BEN JONSON: *Every Man in his Humor.*

MR. COURTLAND'S house was surrounded by a high wall, and stood at the outskirts of the town. A little wooden door, buried deep within the wall, seemed the only entrance. At this Walter paused; and after twice applying to the bell, a footman of a peculiarly grave and sanctimonious appearance opened the door.

In reply to Walter's inquiries he informed him that Mr. Courtland was very unwell, and never saw "company." Walter, however, producing from his pocket-book the introductory letter given him by his uncle, slipped it into the servant's hand, accompanied by half-a-crown, and begged to be announced as a gentleman on very particular business.

"Well, sir, you can step in," said the servant, giving way; "but my master is very poorly, very poorly indeed."

"Indeed, I am sorry to hear it: has he been long so?"

"Going on for ten years, sir!" replied the servant, with great gravity; and opening the door of the house, which stood within a few paces of the wall, on a singularly flat and bare grass-plot, he showed him into a room, and left him alone.

The first thing that struck Walter in this apartment was its remarkable *lightness*. Though not large, it had no less than seven windows. Two sides of the wall seemed indeed all window! Nor were these admittants of the celestial beam shaded by any blind or curtain,—

> "The gaudy, babbling, and remorseless day"

made itself thoroughly at home in this airy chamber. Never-

theless, though so light, it seemed to Walter anything but cheerful. The sun had blistered and discolored the painting of the wainscot, originally of a pale sea-green; there was little furniture in the apartment: one table in the centre, some half-a-dozen chairs, and a very small Turkey carpet, which did not cover one tenth part of the clean, cold, smooth oak boards, constituted all the goods and chattels visible in the room. But what particularly added effect to the bareness of all within, was the singular and laborious bareness of all without. From each of these seven windows, nothing but a forlorn green flat of some extent was to be seen; there was neither tree nor shrub nor flower in the whole expanse, although by several stumps of trees near the house, Walter perceived that the place had not always been so destitute of vegetable life.

While he was yet looking upon this singular baldness of scene, the servant re-entered with his master's compliments and a message that he should be happy to see any relation of Mr. Lester.

Walter accordingly followed the footman into an apartment possessing exactly the same peculiarities as the former one; namely, a most disproportionate plurality of windows, a commodious scantiness of furniture, and a prospect without that seemed as if the house had been built in the middle of Salisbury Plain.

Mr. Courtland himself, a stout man, still preserving the rosy hues and comely features, though certainly not the hilarious expression, which Lester had attributed to him, sat in a large chair close by the centre window, which was open. He rose and shook Walter by the hand with great cordiality.

"Sir, I am delighted to see you! How is your worthy uncle? I only wish he were with you. You dine with me, of course. Thomas, tell the cook to add a tongue and chicken to the roast beef. No, young gentleman, I will have no excuse. Sit down, sit down; pray come near the window. Do you not find it dreadfully close,—not a breath of air? This house is so choked up; don't you find it so, eh? Ah! I see, you can scarcely gasp."

"My dear sir, you are mistaken; I am rather cold, on the contrary,—nor did I ever in my life see a more airy house than yours."

"I try to make it so, sir, but I can't succeed. If you had seen what it was when I first bought it,—a garden here, sir; a copse there; a wilderness, God wot! at the back; and a row of chestnut-trees in the front! You may conceive the consequence, sir: I had not been long here, not two years, before my health was gone, sir, gone,—the d—d vegetable life sucked it out of me. The trees kept away all the air; I was nearly suffocated, without, at first, guessing the cause. But at length, though not till I had been withering away for five years, I discovered the origin of my malady. I went to work, sir: I plucked up the cursed garden, I cut down the infernal chestnuts, I made a bowling-green of the diabolical wilderness. But I fear it is too late; I am dying by inches,—have been dying ever since. The malaria has effectually tainted my constitution."

Here Mr. Courtland heaved a deep sigh, and shook his head with a most gloomy expression of countenance.

"Indeed, sir," said Walter, "I should not, to look at you, imagine that you suffered under any complaint. You seem still the same picture of health that my uncle describes you to have been when you knew him so many years ago."

"Yes, sir, yes,—the confounded malaria fixed the color to my cheeks; the blood is stagnant, sir. Would to Heaven I could see myself a shade paler! The blood does not flow; I am like a pool in a citizen's garden, with a willow at each corner. But a truce to my complaints. You see, sir, I am no hypochondriac, as my fool of a doctor wants to persuade me. A hypochondriac shudders at every breath of air, trembles when a door is open, and looks upon a window as the entrance of death. But I, sir, never can have enough air; thorough draught or east wind, it is all the same to me, so that I do but breathe. Is that like hypochondria?—pshaw! But tell me, young gentleman, about your uncle: is he quite well,—stout, hearty? Does he breathe easily,—no oppression?"

"Sir, he enjoys exceedingly good health. He did please

himself with the hope that I should give him good tidings of yourself and another of his old friends, whom I accidentally saw yesterday,— Sir Peter Hales."

"Hales! Peter Hales! Ah! a clever little fellow that. How delighted Lester's good heart will be to hear that little Peter is so improved,— no longer a dissolute, harum-scarum fellow, throwing away his money, and always in debt. No, no; a respectable, steady character, an excellent manager, an active member of Parliament, domestic in private life. Oh! a very worthy man, sir; a very worthy man!"

"He seems altered, indeed, sir," said Walter, who was young enough in the world to be surprised at this eulogy, "but is still agreeable and fond of anecdote. He told me of his race with you for a thousand guineas."

"Ah! don't talk of those days," said Mr. Courtland, shaking his head pensively; "it makes me melancholy. Yes, Peter ought to recollect that, for he has never paid me to this day,— affected to treat it as a jest, and swore he could have beat me if he would. But indeed it was my fault, sir, — Peter had not then a thousand farthings in the world; and when he grew rich, he became a steady character, and I did not like to remind him of our former follies. Aha! can I offer you a pinch of snuff? You look feverish, sir; surely this room must affect you, though you are too polite to say so. Pray open that door, and then this window, and put your chair right between the two. You have no notion how refreshing the draught is."

Walter politely declined the proffered ague; and thinking he had now made sufficient progress in the acquaintance of this singular non-hypochondriac to introduce the subject he had most at heart, hastened to speak of his father.

"I have chanced, sir," said he, "very unexpectedly upon something that once belonged to my poor father;" here he showed the whip. "I find from the saddler of whom I bought it that the owner was at your house some twelve or fourteen years ago. I do not know whether you are aware that our family have heard nothing respecting my father's fate for a considerably longer time than that which has elapsed since

you appear to have seen him, if at least I may hope that he was your guest and the owner of this whip; and any news you can give me of him, any clew by which he can possibly be traced, would be to us all — to me in particular — an inestimable obligation."

"Your father!" said Mr. Courtland. "Oh, ay,— your uncle's brother. What was his Christian name,— Henry?"

"Geoffrey."

"Ah, exactly; Geoffrey! What! not been heard of? His family not know where he is? A sad thing, sir; but he was always a wild fellow,— now here, now there, like a flash of lightning. But it is true, it is true, he did stay a day here, several years ago, when I first bought the place; I can tell you all about it. But you seem agitated,— do come nearer the window; there, that's right. Well, sir, it is, as I said, a great many years ago,— perhaps fourteen, — and I was speaking to the landlord of the Greyhound about some hay he wished to sell, when a gentleman rode into the yard full tear, as your father always did ride, and in getting out of his way I recognized Geoffrey Lester. I did not know him well,— far from it,— but I had seen him once or twice with your uncle, and though he was a strange pickle, he sang a good song and was deuced amusing. Well, sir, I accosted him; and for the sake of your uncle, I asked him to dine with me and take a bed at my new house. Ah! I little thought what a dear bargain it was to be. He accepted my invitation; for I fancy — no offence, sir — there were few invitations that Mr. Geoffrey Lester ever refused to accept. We dined *tête-à-tête*,— I am an old bachelor, sir,— and very entertaining he was, though his sentiments seemed to me broader than ever. He was capital, however, about the tricks he had played his creditors,— such manœuvres, such escapes! After dinner he asked me if I ever corresponded with his brother. I told him no, that we were very good friends, but never heard from each other; and he then said, 'Well, I shall surprise him with a visit shortly. But in case you *should* unexpectedly have any communication with him, don't mention having seen me; for, to tell you the truth, I am just returned from India, where I

should have scraped up a little money, but that I spent it as fast as I got it. However, you know that I was always proverbially the luckiest fellow in the world [and so, sir, your father was!], and while I was in India I saved an old colonel's life at a tiger-hunt. He went home shortly afterwards, and settled in Yorkshire; and the other day, on my return to England, to which my ill-health drove me, I learned that my old colonel had died recently, and left me a handsome legacy, with his house in Yorkshire. I am now going down to Yorkshire to convert the chattels into gold, to receive my money; and I shall then seek out my good brother, my household gods, and perhaps, though it 's not likely, settle into a sober fellow for the rest of my life.' I don't tell you, young gentleman, that those were your father's exact words,—one can't remember *verbatim* so many years ago; but it was to that effect. He left me the next day, and I never heard anything more of him. To say the truth, he was looking wonderfully yellow, and fearfully reduced. And I fancied at the time he could not live long: he was prematurely old, and decrepit in body, though gay in spirit; so that I had tacitly imagined, in never hearing of him more, that he had departed life. But, good heavens! did you never hear of this legacy?"

"Never; not a word!" said Walter, who had listened to these particulars in great surprise. "And to what part of Yorkshire did he say he was going?"

"That he did not mention."

"Nor the colonel's name?"

"Not as I remember; he might, but I think not. But I am certain that the county was Yorkshire, and the gentleman, whatever his name, was a colonel. Stay: I recollect one more particular which it is lucky I do remember. Your father, in giving me, as I said before, in his own humorous strain, the history of his adventures, his hairbreadth escapes from his duns, the various disguises and the numerous *aliases* he had assumed, mentioned that the name he had borne in India, and by which, he assured me, he had made quite a good character, was Clarke; he also said, by the way, that he still kept to that name, and was very merry on the advantages of

having so common a one,—'By which,' he observed wittily, 'he could father all his own sins on some other Mr. Clarke, at the same time that he could seize and appropriate all the *merits* of all his other namesakes.' Ah, no offence, but he was a sad dog, that father of yours! So you see that in all probability, if he ever reached Yorkshire, it was under the name of Clarke that he claimed and received his legacy."

"You have told me more," said Walter, joyfully, "than we have heard since his disappearance; and I shall turn my horses' heads northward to-morrow, by break of day. But you say, 'If he ever reached Yorkshire.' What should prevent him?"

"His health!" said the non-hypochondriac. "I should not be greatly surprised if—if— In short, you had better look at the gravestones by the way for the name of Clarke."

"Perhaps you can give me the dates, sir," said Walter, somewhat cast down by that melancholy admonition.

"Ah! I'll see, I'll see after dinner; the commonness of the name has its disadvantages now. Poor Geoffrey! I dare say there are fifty tombs to the memory of fifty Clarkes between this and York. But come, sir, there's the dinner-bell."

Whatever might have been the maladies entailed upon the portly frame of Mr. Courtland by the vegetable life of the departed trees, a want of appetite was not among the number. Whenever a man is not abstinent from rule or from early habit, solitude makes its votaries particularly fond of their dinner. They have no other event wherewith to mark their day; they think over it, they anticipate it, they nourish its soft idea in their imagination: if they do look forward to anything else more than dinner, it is—supper!

Mr. Courtland deliberately pinned the napkin to his waistcoat, ordered all the windows to be thrown open, and set to work like the good canon in "Gil Blas." He still retained enough of his former self to preserve an excellent cook; and though most of his viands were of the plainest, who does not know what skill it requires to produce an unexceptionable roast, or a blameless broil!

Half a tureen of strong soup, three pounds at least of stewed

carp, all the *under part* of a sirloin of beef, three quarters of a tongue, the moiety of a chicken, six pancakes and a tartlet, having severally disappeared down the jaws of the invalid,—

> "Et cuncta terrarum subacta
> Præter atrocem animum Catonis,"[1] —

he still called for two devilled biscuits and an anchovy!

When these were gone, he had the wine set on a little table by the window, and declared that the air seemed closer than ever. Walter was no longer surprised at the singular nature of the non-hypochondriac's complaint.

Walter declined the bed that Mr. Courtland offered him,—though his host kindly assured him that it had no curtains, and that there was not a shutter to the house,—upon the plea of starting the next morning at daybreak, and his consequent unwillingness to disturb the regular establishment of the invalid; and Courtland, who was still an excellent, hospitable, friendly man, suffered his friend's nephew to depart with regret. He supplied him, however, by a reference to an old note-book, with the date of the year, and even month, in which he had been favored by a visit from Mr. Clarke, who, it seemed, had also changed his Christian name from Geoffrey to one beginning with D.; but whether it was David or Daniel the host remembered not. In parting with Walter, Courtland shook his head and observed,—

"*Entre nous*, sir, I fear this may be a wild-goose chase. Your father was too facetious to confine himself to fact,—excuse me, sir,—and perhaps the colonel and the legacy were merely inventions *pour passer le temps;* there was only one reason, indeed, that made me fully believe the story."

"What was that, sir?" asked Walter, blushing deeply at the universality of that estimation his father had obtained.

"Excuse me, my young friend."

"Nay, sir, let me press you."

"Why, then, Mr. Geoffrey Lester did not ask me to lend him any money."

The next morning, instead of repairing to the gayeties of

[1] "And everything of earth subdued, except the resolute mind of Cato."

the metropolis, Walter had, upon this dubious clew, altered his journey northward; and with an unquiet yet sanguine spirit, the adventurous son commenced his search after the fate of a father evidently so unworthy of the anxiety he had excited.

CHAPTER VIII.

WALTER'S MEDITATIONS.—THE CORPORAL'S GRIEF AND ANGER.—THE CORPORAL PERSONALLY DESCRIBED.—AN EXPLANATION WITH HIS MASTER.—THE CORPORAL OPENS HIMSELF TO THE YOUNG TRAVELLER.—HIS OPINIONS OF LOVE; ON THE WORLD; ON THE PLEASURE AND RESPECTABILITY OF CHEATING; ON LADIES, AND A PARTICULAR CLASS OF LADIES; ON AUTHORS; ON THE VALUE OF WORDS; ON FIGHTING: WITH SUNDRY OTHER MATTERS OF EQUAL DELECTATION AND IMPROVEMENT.—AN UNEXPECTED EVENT.

> QUALE per incertam lunam sub luce maligna
> Est iter.[1] — VIRGIL.

THE road prescribed to our travellers by the change in their destination led them back over a considerable portion of the ground they had already traversed; and since the corporal took care that they should remain some hours in the place where they dined, night fell upon them as they found themselves in the midst of the same long and dreary stage in which they had encountered Sir Peter Hales and the two suspected highwaymen.

Walter's mind was full of the project on which he was bent. The reader can fully comprehend how vivid were the emotions called up by the hope of a solution of the enigma to his father's fate; and sanguinely did he now indulge those intense meditations with which the imaginative minds of the young always brood over every more favorite idea, until they exalt the hope into a passion. Everything connected with

[1] "Even as a journey by the unpropitious light of the uncertain moon."

this strange and roving parent had possessed for the breast of his son not only an anxious, but indulgent interest. The judgment of a young man is always inclined to sympathize with the wilder and more enterprising order of spirits; and Walter had been at no loss for secret excuses wherewith to defend the irregular life and reckless habits of his parent. Amidst all his father's evident and utter want of principle, Walter clung with a natural and self-deceptive partiality to the few traits of courage or generosity which relieved, if they did not redeem, his character,—traits which, with a character of that stamp, are so often, though always so unprofitably blended, and which generally cease with the commencement of age. He now felt elated by the conviction, as he had always been inspired by the hope, that it was to be his lot to discover one whom he still believed living, and whom he trusted to find amended. The same intimate persuasion of the "good luck" of Geoffrey Lester, which all who had known him appeared to entertain, was felt even in a more credulous and earnest degree by his son. Walter gave way now, indeed, to a variety of conjectures as to the motives which could have induced his father to persist in the concealment of his fate after his return to England; but such of those conjectures as, if the more rational, were also the more despondent, he speedily and resolutely dismissed. Sometimes he thought that his father, on learning the death of the wife he had abandoned, might have been possessed with a remorse which rendered him unwilling to disclose himself to the rest of his family, and a feeling that the main tie of home was broken; sometimes he thought that the wanderer had been disappointed in his expected legacy, and, dreading the attacks of his creditors, or unwilling to throw himself once more on the generosity of his brother, had again suddenly quitted England and entered on some enterprise or occupation abroad. It was also possible, to one so reckless and changeful, that even, after receiving the legacy, a proposition from some wild comrade might have hurried him away on any Continental project at the mere impulse of the moment,—for the impulse of the moment had always been the guide of his life; and once abroad, he might

have returned to India, and in new connections forgotten the old ties at home. Letters from abroad, too, miscarry; and it was not improbable that the wanderer might have written repeatedly, and receiving no answer to his communications, imagined that the dissoluteness of his life had deprived him of the affections of his family; and deserving so well to have the proffer of renewed intercourse rejected, believed that it actually was so. These and a hundred similar conjectures found favor in the eyes of the young traveller; but the chances of a fatal accident or sudden death he pertinaciously refused at present to include in the number of probabilities. Had his father been seized with a mortal illness on the road, was it not likely that, in the remorse occasioned in the hardiest by approaching death, he would have written to his brother, and, recommending his child to his care, have apprised him of the addition to his fortune? Walter, then, did not meditate embarrassing his present journey by those researches among the dead which the worthy Courtland had so considerately recommended to his prudence; should his expedition, contrary to his hopes, prove wholly unsuccessful, it might then be well to retrace his steps and adopt the suggestion. But what man, at the age of twenty-one, ever took much precaution on the darker side of a question in which his heart was interested?

With what pleasure, escaping from conjecture to a more ultimate conclusion, did he, in recalling those words, in which his father had more than hinted to Courtland of his future amendment, contemplate recovering a parent made wise by years and sober by misfortunes, and restoring him to a hearth of tranquil virtues and peaceful enjoyments! He imaged to himself a scene of that domestic happiness which is so perfect in our dreams, because in our dreams monotony is always excluded from the picture. And in this creation of Fancy, the form of Ellinor, his bright-eyed and gentle cousin, was not the least conspicuous. Since his altercation with Madeline, the love he had once thought so ineffaceable had faded into a dim and sullen hue; and in proportion as the image of Madeline grew indistinct, that of her sister became more brilliant. Often, now, as he rode slowly onward in the quiet of

the deepening night, and the mellow stars softening all on which they shone, he pressed the little token of Ellinor's affection to his heart, and wondered that it was only within the last few days he had discovered that her eyes were more beautiful than Madeline's and her smile more touching. Meanwhile the redoubted corporal, who was by no means pleased with the change in his master's plans, lingered behind, whistling the most melancholy tune in his collection. No young lady, anticipative of balls or coronets, had ever felt more complacent satisfaction in a journey to London than that which had cheered the athletic breast of the veteran on finding himself at last within one day's gentle march of the metropolis. And no young lady suddenly summoned back in the first flush of her *début* by an unseasonable fit of gout or economy in papa, ever felt more irreparably aggrieved than now did the dejected corporal. His master had not yet even acquainted him with the cause of the counter-march; and in his own heart he believed it nothing but the wanton levity and unpardonable fickleness "common to all them 'ere boys afore they have seen the world." He certainly considered himself a singularly ill-used and injured man; and drawing himself up to his full height, as if it were a matter with which Heaven should be acquainted at the earliest possible opportunity, he indulged, as we before said, in the melancholy consolation of a whistled death-dirge, occasionally interrupted by a long-drawn interlude, half sigh, half snuffle, of his favorite augh, baugh!

And here we remember that we have not as yet given to our reader a fitting portrait of the corporal on horseback. Perhaps no better opportunity than the present may occur; and perhaps, also, Corporal Bunting, as well as Melrose Abbey, may seem a yet more interesting picture when viewed by the pale moonlight.

The corporal, then, wore on his head a small cocked hat which had formerly belonged to the colonel of the Forty-second,—the prints of my uncle Toby may serve to suggest its shape; it had once boasted a feather,—that was gone: but the gold lace, though tarnished, and the cockade, though bat-

tered, still remained. From under this shade the profile of the corporal assumed a particular aspect of heroism. Though a good-looking man in the main, it was his air, height, and complexion which made him so; and, unlike Lucian's one-eyed prince, a side view was not the most favorable point in which his features could be regarded. His eyes, which were small and shrewd, were half hid by a pair of thick, shaggy brows, which, while he whistled, he moved to and fro as a horse moves his ears when he gives warning that he intends to shy. His nose was straight,—so far so good: but then it did not go far enough; for though it seemed no despicable proboscis in front, somehow or another it appeared exceedingly short in profile. To make up for this, the upper lip was of a length the more striking from being exceedingly straight,—it had learned to hold itself upright and make the most of its length, as well as its master. His under lip, alone protruded in the act of whistling, served yet more markedly to throw the nose into the background. And as for the chin,—talk of the upper lip being long, indeed! the chin would have made two of it. Such a chin! so long, so broad, so massive, had it been put on a dish it might have passed, without discredit, for a round of beef; and it looked yet larger than it was, from the exceeding tightness of the stiff, black-leather stock below, which forced forth all the flesh it encountered into another chin,—a remove to the round! The hat being somewhat too small for the corporal, and being cocked knowingly in front, left the hinder half of the head exposed. And the hair, carried into a club according to the fashion, lay thick, and of a grizzled black, on the brawny shoulders below. The veteran was dressed in a blue coat, originally a frock; but the skirts, having once, to the imminent peril of the place they guarded, caught fire as the corporal stood basking himself at Peter Dealtry's, had been so far amputated as to leave only the stump of a tail, which just covered, and no more, that part which neither Art in bipeds nor Nature in quadrupeds loves to leave wholly exposed. And that part, ah, how ample! Had Liston seen it, he would have hid forever his diminished—opposite to *head!* No wonder the corporal had

been so annoyed by the parcel of the previous day! A coat so short and a — ; but no matter, pass we to the rest. It was not only in its skirts that this wicked coat was deficient: the corporal, who had within the last few years thriven lustily in the inactive serenity of Grassdale, had outgrown it prodigiously across the chest and girth; nevertheless he managed to button it up. And thus the muscular proportions of the wearer, bursting forth in all quarters, gave him the ludicrous appearance of a gigantic schoolboy. His wrists and large, sinewy hands, both employed at the bridle of his hard-mouthed charger, were markedly visible; for it was the corporal's custom, whenever he came to an obscure part of the road, carefully to take off and prudently to pocket a pair of scrupulously clean white leather gloves, which smartened up his appearance prodigiously in passing through the towns in their route. His breeches were of yellow buckskin and ineffably tight; his stockings were of gray worsted; and a pair of laced boots, that reached the ascent of a very mountainous calf, but declined any farther progress, completed his attire.

Fancy, then, this figure, seated with laborious and unswerving perpendicularity on a demi-pique saddle ornamented with a huge pair of well-stuffed saddle-bags, and holsters revealing the stocks of a brace of immense pistols, the horse with its obstinate mouth thrust out, and the bridle drawn as tight as a bowstring, its ears laid sullenly down, as if, like the corporal, it complained of going to Yorkshire, and its long thick tail, not set up in a comely and well-educated arch, but hanging sheepishly down, as if resolved that its buttocks should at least be better covered than its master's!

And now, reader, it is not our fault if you cannot form some conception of the physical perfections of the corporal and his steed.

The revery of the contemplative Bunting was interrupted by the voice of his master calling upon him to approach.

"Well, well," muttered he, "the younker can't expect one as close at his heels as if we were trotting into Lunnon, which we might be at this time, sure enough, if he had not been so d—d flighty, augh!"

"Bunting, I say, do you hear?"

"Yes, your honor, yes; this 'ere horse is so 'nation sluggish."

"Sluggish! why, I thought he was too much the reverse, Bunting. I thought he was one rather requiring the bridle than the spur."

"Augh! your honor, he 's slow when he should not, and fast when he should not,—changes his mind from pure whim or pure spite. New to the world, your honor, that 's all; a different thing if properly broke. There be a many like him!"

"You mean to be personal, Mr. Bunting," said Walter, laughing at the evident ill-humor of his attendant.

"Augh! indeed, and no!—I dare n't. A poor man like me go for to presume to be parsonal,—unless I get hold of a poorer!"

"Why, Bunting, you do not mean to say that you would be so ungenerous as to affront a man because he was poorer than you? Fie!"

"Whaugh, your honor! and is not that the very reason why I 'd affront him? Surely, it is not my betters I should affront,—that would be ill-bred, your honor; quite want of discipline."

"But we owe it to our Great Commander," said Walter, "to love all men."

"Augh, sir! that 's very good maxim,—none better; but shows ignorance of the world, sir, great!"

"Bunting, your way of thinking is quite disgraceful. Do you know, sir, that it is the Bible you were speaking of?"

"Augh, sir! but the Bible was addressed to them Jew cretures! Howsomever, it 's an excellent book for the poor,—keeps 'm in order, favors discipline; none more so."

"Hold your tongue! I called you, Bunting, because I think I heard you say you had once been at York. Do you know what towns we shall pass on our road thither?"

"Not I, your honor: it 's a mighty long way. What would the squire think? Just at Lunnon, too! Could have learned the whole road, sir, inns and all, if you had but gone on to Lunnon first. Howsomever, young gentlemen will be hasty,—no confidence in those older, and who are experienced in

the world. I knows what I knows;" and the corporal recommenced his whistle.

"Why, Bunting, you seem quite discontented at my change of journey. Are you tired of riding, or were you very eager to get to town?"

"Augh! sir, I was only thinking of what's best for your honor. I — 't is not for me to like or dislike. Howsomever, the horses, poor creturs, must want rest for some days. Them dumb animals can't go on forever, bumpety, bumpety, as your honor and I do. Whaugh!"

"It is very true, Bunting; and I have had some thoughts of sending you home again with the horses, and travelling post."

"Eh!" grunted the corporal, opening his eyes, "hopes your honor be n't serious."

"Why, if *you* continue to look so serious, I must be serious too. You understand, Bunting?"

"Augh! and that's all, your honor," cried the corporal, brightening up; "shall look merry enough to-morrow, when one's in, as it were, like, to the change of the road. But you see, sir, it took me by surprise. Said I to myself, says I, It is an odd thing for you, Jacob Bunting, on the faith of a man it is, to go tramp here, tramp there, without knowing why or wherefore, as if you were still a private in the Forty-second, 'stead of a retired corporal. You see, your honor, my pride was a-hurt; but it's all over now,—only spites those beneath me. I knows the world at my time o' life."

"Well, Bunting, when you learn the reason of my change of plan, you'll be perfectly satisfied that I do quite right. In a word, you know that my father has been long missing; I have found a clew by which I yet hope to trace him. This is the reason of my journey to Yorkshire."

"Augh!" said the corporal, "and a very good reason. You're a most excellent son, sir,—and Lunnon so nigh!"

"The thought of London seems to have bewitched you. Did you expect to find the streets of gold since you were there last?"

"A — well, sir, I hears they *be* greatly improved."

"Pshaw! you talk of knowing the world, Bunting, and yet you pant to enter it with all the inexperience of a boy. Why, even I could set you an example."

"'T is 'cause I knows the world," said the corporal, exceedingly nettled, "that I wants to get back to it. I have heard of some spoonies as never kist a girl; but never heard of any one who had kist a girl once that did not long to be at it again."

"And I suppose, Mr. Profligate, it is that longing which makes you so hot for London?"

"There have been worse longings nor that," quoth the corporal, gravely.

"Perhaps you meditate marrying one of the London belles, — an heiress, eh?"

"Can't but say," said the corporal, very solemnly, "but that might be 'ticed to marry a fortin, if so be she was young, pretty, good-tempered, and fell desperately in love with *me*, — best quality of all."

"You're a modest fellow."

"Why, the longer a man lives, the more knows his value. Would not sell myself a bargain now, whatever might at twenty-one."

"At that rate you would be beyond all price at seventy," said Walter. "But now tell me, Bunting, were you ever in love, — really and honestly in love?"

"Indeed, your honor," said the corporal, "I have been over head and ears; but that was afore I learnt to swim. Love's very like bathing. At first we go souse to the bottom; but if we're not drowned then, we gather pluck, grow calm, strike out gently, and make a deal pleasanter thing of it afore we've done. I'll tell you, sir, what I thinks of love: 'twixt you and me, sir, 't is not that great thing in life boys and girls want to make it out to be. If 't were one's dinner, that would be summut, for one can't do without that; but lauk, sir, love's all in the fancy. One does not eat it, nor drink it; and as for the rest, — why, it's bother!"

"Bunting, you're a beast," said Walter, in a rage; for though the corporal had come off with a slight rebuke for his

sneer at religion, we grieve to say that an attack on the sacredness of love seemed a crime beyond all toleration to the theologian of twenty-one.

The corporal bowed, and thrust his tongue in his cheek.

There was a pause of some moments.

"And what," said Walter, for his spirits were raised, and he liked recurring to the quaint shrewdness of the corporal, "and what, after all, is the great charm of the world, that you so much wished to return to it?"

"Augh!" replied the corporal, "'t is a pleasant thing to look about un with all one's eyes open: rogue here, rogue there,—keeps one alive. Life in Lunnon, life in a village,—all the difference 'twixt healthy walk and a doze in arm-chair; by the faith of a man, 't is!"

"What! it is pleasant to have rascals about one?"

"Sure*ly* yes," returned the corporal, dryly. "What so delightful like as to feel one's cliverness and 'bility all set on end,—bristling up like a porkypine? Nothing makes a man tread so light, feel so proud, breathe so briskly, as the knowledge that he has all his wits about him, that he 's a match for any one, that the divil himself could not take him in!"

Walter laughed.

"And to feel one is likely to be cheated is the pleasantest way of passing one's time in town, Bunting, eh?"

"Augh! and in cheating too!" answered the corporal; "'cause you sees, sir, there be two ways o' living: one to cheat,—one to be cheated. 'T is pleasant enough to be cheated for a little while, as the younkers are, and as you 'll be, your honor; but that 's a pleasure don't last long,—t' other lasts all your life. Dare say your honor 's often heard rich gentlemen say to their sons, 'You ought, for your own happiness's sake like, my lad, to have summut to do; ought to have some profession, be you niver so rich:' very true, your honor; and what does that mean? Why, it means that, 'stead of being idle and cheated, the boy ought to be busy and cheat, augh!"

"Must a man who follows a profession necessarily cheat, then?"

"Baugh! can your honor ask that? Does not the lawyer cheat? and the doctor cheat? and the parson cheat more than any? And that's the reason they all takes so much int'rest in their profession,—bother!"

"But the soldier? You say nothing of him."

"Why, the soldier," said the corporal, with dignity,—"the *private* soldier, poor fellow, is only cheated; but when he comes for to get for to be as high as a corp'ral, or a sargent, he comes for to get to bully others and to cheat. Augh! then, 't is not for the privates to cheat; that would be 'sumption indeed, save us!"

"The general, then, cheats more than any, I suppose?"

"'Course, your honor: he talks to the world 'bout honor, an' glory, and love of his country, and such like! Augh! that's proper cheating!"

"You're a bitter fellow, Mr. Bunting. And, pray, what do you think of the ladies? Are they as bad as the men?"

"Ladies,—augh! when they're married, yes. But of all them 'ere creturs, I respects the kept ladies the most; on the faith of a man, I do! Gad! how well they knows the world,—one quite envies the she-rogues; they beats the wives hollow! Augh! and your honor should see how they fawns, and flatters, and butters up a man, and makes him think they loves him like winkey, all the time they ruins him! They kisses money out of the miser, and sits in their satins, while the wife—'drot her!—sulks in a gingham. Oh, they be clever creturs, and they'll do what they likes with Old Nick, when they gets there, for 't is the old gentlemen they cozens the best. And then," continued the corporal, waxing more and more loquacious, for his appetite in talking grew with what it fed on,—"then there be another set o' queer folks you'll see in Lunnon, sir; that is, if you falls in with 'em,—hang all together, quite in a clink. I seed lots on 'em when lived with the colonel,—Colonel Dysart, you knows, augh!"

"And what are they?"

"Rum ones, your honor; what they calls authors."

"Authors! what the deuce had you or the colonel to do with authors?"

"Augh! then, the colonel was a very fine gentleman,—what the larned calls a my-seen-ass; wrote little songs himself,—'cross-ticks, you knows, your honor. Once he made a play,—'cause why? He lived with an actress!"

"A very good reason indeed for emulating Shakspeare! And did the play succeed?"

"Fancy it did, your honor, for the colonel was a dab with the scissors."

"Scissors! The pen, you mean."

"No, that 's what the dirty authors make plays with; a lord and a colonel, my-seen-asses, always takes the scissors."

"How?"

"Why, the colonel's lady had lots of plays, and she marked a scene here, a jest there, a line in one place, a bit of blarney in t' other; and the colonel sat by with a great paper book, cut 'em out, pasted them in book. Augh! but the colonel pleased the town mightily."

"Well, so he saw a great many authors: and did not they please you?"

"Why, they be so d—d quarrelsome," said the corporal,—"wringle, wrangle, wrongle, snap, growl, scratch. That 's not what a man of the world does: man of the world niver quarrels. Then, too, these creturs always fancy you forgets that their father was a clargyman; they always thinks more of their family like than their writings; and if they does not get money when they wants it, they bristles up and cries, 'Not treated like a gentleman, by G—!' Yet, after all, they 've a deal of kindness in 'em, if you knows how to manage 'em, augh! but cat-kindness,—paw to-day, claw to-morrow. And then they always marries young, the poor things! and have a power of children, and live on the fame and fortin they *are* to get one of these days; for, my eye! they be the most sanguinest folks alive."

"Why, Bunting, what an observer you have been! Who could ever have imagined that you had made yourself master of so many varieties in men!"

"Augh, your honor, I had nothing to do when I was the colonel's valley but to take notes to ladies and make use of my eyes. Always a 'flective man."

"It is odd that, with all your abilities, you did not provide better for yourself."

"'T was not my fault," said the corporal, quickly; "but, somehow, do what will, 't is not always the cliverest as foresees the best. But I be young yet, your honor!"

Walter stared at the corporal, and laughed outright. The corporal was exceedingly piqued.

"Augh! mayhap you thinks, sir, that 'cause not so young as you, not young at all; but what 's forty, or fifty, or fifty-five in public life? Never hear much of men afore then. 'T is the autumn that reaps; spring sows — augh! bother!"

"Very true, and very poetical. I see you did not live among authors for nothing."

"I knows summut of language, your honor," quoth the corporal, pedantically.

"It is evident."

"For to be a man of the world, sir, must know all the ins and outs of speechifying; 't is words, sir, that makes another man's mare go your road. Augh! that must have been a cliver man as invented language; wonders who 't was, — mayhap Moses, your honor?"

"Never mind who it was," said Walter, gravely; "use the gift discreetly."

"Umph!" said the corporal. "Yes, your honor," renewed he, after a pause, "it be a marvel to think on how much a man does in the way of cheating as has the gift of the gab. Wants a missis, talks her over; wants your purse, talks you out on it; wants a place, talks himself into it. What makes the parson? — words; the lawyer? — words; the parliament man? — words. Words can ruin a country, in the big house; words saves souls, in the pulpits; words make even them 'ere authors, poor creturs, in every man's mouth. Augh! sir, take note of the *words*, and the *things* will take care of themselves — bother!"

"Your reflections amaze me, Bunting," said Walter, smil-

ing. "But the night begins to close in; I trust we shall not meet with any misadventure."

"'T is an ugsome bit of road!" said the corporal, looking round him.

"The pistols?"

"Primed and loaded, your honor."

"After all, Bunting, a little skirmish would be no bad sport, eh, especially to an old soldier like you?"

"Augh! baugh! 'T is no pleasant work fighting, without pay, at least. 'T is not like love and eating, your honor,—the better for being what they calls 'gratis.'"

"Yet I have heard you talk of the pleasure of fighting,—not for pay, Bunting, but for your king and country."

"Augh! and that's when I wanted to cheat the poor creturs at Grassdale, your honor. Don't take the liberty to talk stuff to my master."

They continued thus to beguile the way till Walter again sank into a revery, while the corporal, who began more and more to dislike the aspect of the ground they had entered on, still rode by his side.

The road was heavy, and wound down the long hill which had stricken so much dismay into the corporal's stout heart on the previous day, when he had beheld its commencement at the extremity of the town, where but for him they had *not* dined. They were now a little more than a mile from the said town. The whole of the way was taken up by this hill, and the road, very different from the smoothened declivities of the present day, seemed to have been cut down the very steepest part of its centre. Loose stones and deep ruts increased the difficulty of the descent, and it was with a slow pace and a guarded rein that both our travellers now continued their journey. On the left side of the road was a thick and lofty hedge; to the right a wild, bare, savage heath sloped downward, and just afforded a glimpse of the spires and chimneys of the town, at which the corporal was already supping in idea. That incomparable personage was, however, abruptly recalled to the present instant by a most violent stumble on the part of his hard-mouthed, Roman-nosed

horse. The horse was all but down, and the corporal all but over.

"D—n it," said the corporal, slowly recovering his perpendicularity; "and the way to Lunnon was as smooth as a bowling-green!"

Ere this rueful exclamation was well out of the corporal's mouth, a bullet whizzed past him from the hedge. It went so close to his ear that but for that lucky stumble, Jacob Bunting had been as the grass of the field, which flourisheth one moment and is cut down the next.

Startled by the sound, the corporal's horse made off full tear down the hill, and carried him several paces beyond his master ere he had power to stop its career. But Walter, reining up his better-managed steed, looked round for the enemy,—nor looked in vain.

Three men started from the hedge with a simultaneous shout. Walter fired, but without effect; ere he could lay hand on the second pistol his bridle was seized, and a violent blow from a long double-handed bludgeon brought him to the ground.

BOOK III.

O. Λύπη μάλιστα γ' ἡ διαφθείρουσά με.
M. Δεινὴ γὰρ ἡ θεὸς, ἀλλ' ὅμως, ἱάσιμος·
O. Μανίαι τε—
. . . . . .
M. Φαντασμάτων δὲ τάδε νοσεῖς ποίων ὑπό;
—Ὀρέστ. 398–407.

O. Mightiest indeed is the grief consuming me.
M. Dreadful is the Divinity, but still placable.
O. The Furies also—
. . . . . .
M. Urged by what apparitions do you rave thus?

CHAPTER I.

FRAUD AND VIOLENCE ENTER EVEN GRASSDALE.—PETER'S NEWS.—THE LOVERS' WALK.—THE REAPPEARANCE.

Auf. Whence comest thou? What wouldest thou?—*Coriolanus.*

One evening Aram and Madeline were passing through the village on their accustomed walk, when Peter Dealtry sallied forth from The Spotted Dog, and hurried up to the lovers with a countenance full of importance, and a little ruffled by fear.

"Oh, sir, sir (miss, your servant!), have you heard the news? Two houses at Checkington [a small town some miles distant from Grassdale] were forcibly entered last night,—robbed, your honor, robbed! Squire Tibson was tied to his bed, his bureau rifled, himself shockingly *confused* on the head, and the maid-servant, Sally,—her sister lived with me; a very good girl,—was locked up in the cupboard. As to the other house, they carried off all the plate. There were no less

than four men, all masked, your honor, and armed with pistols. What if they should come here? Such a thing was never heard of before in these parts. But, sir,—but, miss,—do not be afraid, do not ye, now; for I may say with the Psalmist,—

> "'For wicked men shall drink the dregs
> Which they in wrath shall wring;
> For *I* will lift my voice and make
> Them flee while I do sing.'"

"You could not find a more effectual method of putting them to flight, Peter," said Madeline, smiling; "but go and talk to my father. I know we have a whole magazine of blunderbusses and guns at home: they may be useful now. But you are well provided in case of attack. Have you not the corporal's famous cat, Jacobina?—surely a match for fifty robbers!"

"Ay, miss; on the principle of set a thief to catch a thief, perhaps she may be. But, really, it is no jesting matter. I don't say as how I am timbersome; but though flesh is grass, I does not wish to be cut down afore my time. Ah! Mr. Aram, your house is very lonesome like; it is out of reach of all your neighbors. Had n't you better, sir, take up your lodgings at the squire's for the present?"

Madeline pressed Aram's arm, and looked up fearfully in his face. "Why, my good friend," said he to Dealtry, "robbers will have little to gain in my house, unless they are given to learned pursuits. It would be something new, Peter, to see a gang of housebreakers making off with a telescope, or a pair of globes, or a great folio covered with dust."

"Ay, your honor; but they may be the more savage for being disappointed."

"Well, well, Peter, we will see," replied Aram, impatiently; "meanwhile we may meet you again at the Hall. Good evening for the present."

"Do, dearest Eugene, do, for Heaven's sake!" said Madeline, with tears in her eyes, as, turning from Dealtry, they directed their steps towards the quiet valley, at the end of

which the student's house was situated, and which was now more than ever Madeline's favorite walk. "Do, dearest Eugene, come up to the manor-house till these wretches are apprehended. Consider how open *your* house is to attack; and surely there can be no necessity to remain in it now."

Aram's calm brow darkened for a moment. "What, dearest!" said he, "can you be affected by the foolish fears of yon dotard? How do we know as yet whether this improbable story have any foundation in truth? At all events, it is evidently exaggerated. Perhaps an invasion of the poultry-yard, in which some hungry fox was the real offender, may be the true origin of this terrible tale. Nay, love, nay, do not look thus reproachfully; it will be time enough for us, when we have sifted the grounds of alarm, to take our precautions; meanwhile, do not blame me if in your presence I cannot admit fear. Oh, Madeline, dear, dear Madeline, could you guess, could you dream, how different life has become to me since I knew you! Formerly, I will frankly own to you that dark and boding apprehensions were wont to lie heavy at my heart; the cloud was more familiar to me than sunshine. But now I have grown a child, and can see around me nothing but hope; my life was winter,—your love has breathed it into spring."

"And yet, Eugene, yet—"

"Yet what, my Madeline?"

"There are still moments when I have no power over your thoughts,—moments when you break away from me; when you mutter to yourself feelings in which I have no share, and which seem to steal the consciousness from your eye and the color from your lip."

"Ah, indeed!" said Aram, quickly. "What! you watch me so closely?"

"Can you wonder that I do?" said Madeline, with an earnest tenderness in her voice.

"You must not, then, you must not," returned her lover, almost fiercely; "I cannot bear too nice and sudden a scrutiny. Consider how long I have clung to a stern and solitary independence of thought, which allows no watch, and forbids ac-

count of itself to any one. Leave it to time and your love to win their inevitable way. Ask not too much from me now. And mark, mark, I pray you, whenever, in spite of myself, these moods you refer to darken over me, heed not, listen not. *Leave me;* solitude is their only cure! Promise me this, love, promise!"

"It is a harsh request, Eugene, and I do not think I will grant you so complete a monopoly of thought," answered Madeline, playfully, yet half in earnest.

"Madeline," said Aram, with a deep solemnity of manner, "I ask a request on which my very love for you depends. From the depths of my soul, I implore you to grant it,—yea, to the very letter."

"Why, why, this is—" began Madeline; when, encountering the full, the dark, the inscrutable gaze of her strange lover, she broke off in a sudden fear which she could not analyze, and only added, in a low and subdued voice, "I promise to obey you."

As if a weight were lifted from his heart, Aram now brightened at once into himself in his happiest mood. He poured forth a torrent of grateful confidence, of buoyant love, that soon swept from the remembance of the blushing and enchanted Madeline the momentary fear, the sudden chillness, which his look had involuntarily stricken into her mind. And as they now wound along the most lonely part of that wild valley, his arm twined round her waist and his low but silver voice giving magic to the very air she breathed, she felt, perhaps, a more entire and unruffled sentiment of present, and a more credulous persuasion of future, happiness than she had ever experienced before. And Aram himself dwelt with a more lively and detailed fulness than he was wont on the prospects they were to share, and the security and peace which retirement would bestow upon their life.

"Shall it not," he said, "shall it not be that we shall look from our retreat upon the shifting passions and the hollow loves of the distant world? We can have no petty object, no vain allurement, to distract the unity of our affection; we must be all in all to each other: for what else can there be to

engross our thoughts and occupy our feelings *here?* If, my beautiful love, you have selected one whom the world might deem a strange choice for youth and loveliness like yours, you have at least selected one who *can* have no idol but yourself. The poets tell you, and rightly, that solitude is the fit sphere for love; but how few are the lovers whom solitude does not fatigue! They rush into retirement with souls unprepared for its stern joys and its unvarying tranquillity; they weary of each other, because the solitude itself to which they fled palls upon and oppresses them. But to me, the freedom which low minds call obscurity is the aliment of life. I do not enter the temples of Nature as a stranger, but the priest; nothing can ever tire me of the lone and august altars on which I sacrificed my youth. And now, what Nature, what Wisdom once were to me — no, no, more, immeasurably more than these — you are! Oh, Madeline, methinks there is nothing under heaven like the feeling which puts us apart from all that agitates and fevers and degrades the herd of men; which grants us to control the tenor of our future life, because it annihilates our dependence upon others; and while the rest of earth are hurried on, blind and unconscious, by the hand of Fate, leaves us the sole lords of our destiny, and able, from the Past, which we have governed, to become the Prophets of our Future!"

At this moment Madeline uttered a faint shriek, and clung trembling to Aram's arm. Amazed, and aroused from his enthusiasm, he looked up, and on seeing the cause of her alarm, seemed himself transfixed, as by a sudden terror, to the earth.

But a few paces distant, standing amidst the long and rank fern that grew on either side of their path, quite motionless, and looking on the pair with a sarcastic smile, stood the ominous stranger whom the second chapter of our first book introduced to the reader.

For one instant Aram seemed utterly appalled and overcome; his cheek grew the color of death; and Madeline felt his heart beat with a loud, a fearful force beneath the breast to which she clung. But his was not the nature any earthly dread could long daunt. He whispered to Madeline to come

on; and slowly, and with his usual firm but gliding step, continued his way.

"Good evening, Eugene Aram," said the stranger; and as he spoke, he touched his hat slightly to Madeline.

"I thank you," replied the student, in a calm voice. "Do you want aught with me?"

"Humph! yes, if it so please you."

"Pardon me, dear Madeline," said Aram, softly, and disengaging himself from her, "but for one moment."

He advanced to the stranger; and Madeline could not but note that, as Aram accosted him, his brow fell, and his manner seemed violent and agitated: but she could not hear the words of either, nor did the conference last above a minute. The stranger bowed, and turning away, soon vanished among the shrubs. Aram regained the side of his mistress.

"Who," cried she, eagerly, "*is* that fearful man? What is his business? What his name?"

"He is a man whom I knew well some fourteen years ago," replied Aram, coldly, and with ease; "I did not then lead quite so lonely a life, and we were thrown much together. Since that time he has been in unfortunate circumstances,—rejoined the army (he was in early life a soldier, and had been disbanded), entered into business, and failed; in short, he has partaken of those vicissitudes inseparable from the life of one driven to seek the world. When he travelled this road some months ago, he accidentally heard of my residence in the neighborhood, and naturally sought me. Poor as I am, I was of some assistance to him. His route brings him hither again, and he again seeks me: I suppose, too, that I must again aid him."

"And is that *indeed* all?" said Madeline, breathing more freely. "Well, poor man, if he be your friend, he must be inoffensive,—I have done him wrong. And does he want money? I have some to give him,—here, Eugene!" And the simple-hearted girl put her purse into Aram's hand.

"No, dearest," said he, shrinking back, "no, we shall not require *your* contribution; I can easily spare him enough for the present. But let us turn back, it grows chill."

"And why did he leave us, Eugene?"

"Because I desired him to visit me at home an hour hence."

"An hour! then you will not sup with us to-night?"

"No, not this night, dearest."

The conversation now ceased; Madeline in vain endeavored to renew it. Aram, though without relapsing into one of his frequent reveries, answered her only in monosyllables. They arrived at the manor-house, and Aram at the garden-gate took leave of her for the night, and hastened backward towards his home. Madeline, after watching his form through the deepening shadows until it disappeared, entered the house with a listless step; a nameless and thrilling presentiment crept to her heart, and she could have sat down and wept, though without a cause.

CHAPTER II.

THE INTERVIEW BETWEEN ARAM AND THE STRANGER.

> THE spirits I have raised abandon me;
> The spells which I have studied baffle me. — *Manfred.*

MEANWHILE Aram strode rapidly through the village, and not till he had regained the solitary valley did he relax his step.

The evening had already deepened into night. Along the sere and melancholy woods the autumnal winds crept with a lowly but gathering moan. Where the water held its course, a damp and ghostly mist clogged the air; but the skies were calm, and checkered only by a few clouds that swept in long, white, spectral streaks over the solemn stars. Now and then the bat wheeled swiftly round, almost touching the figure of the student as he walked musingly onward. And the owl,[1] that before the month waned many days would be seen no more in that region, came heavily from the trees like a guilty

[1] That species called the short-eared owl.

thought that deserts its shade. It was one of those nights, half dim, half glorious, which mark the early decline of the year. Nature seemed restless and instinct with change; there were those signs in the atmosphere which leave the most experienced in doubt whether the morning may rise in storm or sunshine. And in this particular period, the skyey influences seem to tincture the animal life with their own mysterious and wayward spirit of change. The birds desert their summer haunts; an unaccountable disquietude pervades the brute creation; even men in this unsettled season have considered themselves, more than at others, stirred by the motion and whisperings of their genius; and every creature that flows upon the tide of the Universal Life of Things feels upon the ruffled surface the mighty and solemn change which is at work within its depths.

And now Aram had nearly threaded the valley, and his own abode became visible on the opening plain, when the stranger emerged from the trees to the right, and suddenly stood before the student. "I tarried for you here, Aram," said he, "instead of seeking you at home at the time you fixed, for there are certain private reasons which make it prudent I should keep as much as possible among the owls; and it was therefore safer, if not more pleasant, to lie here amidst the fern than to make myself merry in the village yonder."

"And what," said Aram, "again brings you hither? Did you not say, when you visited me some months since, that you were about to settle in a different part of the country, with a relation?"

"And so I intended; but Fate, as you would say, or the devil, as I should, ordered it otherwise. I had not long left you when I fell in with some old friends,—bold spirits and true, the brave outlaws of the road and the field. Shall I have any shame in confessing that I preferred their society—a society not unfamiliar to me—to the dull and solitary life that I might have led in tending my old bedridden relation in Wales, who, after all, may live these twenty years, and at the end can scarcely leave me enough for a week's ill-luck at the hazard-table? In a word, I joined my gallant friends and

intrusted myself to their guidance. Since then, we have cruised around the country, regaled ourselves cheerily, frightened the timid, silenced the fractious, and by the help of your fate, or my devil, have found ourselves, by accident, brought to exhibit our valor in this very district, honored by the dwelling-place of my learned friend Eugene Aram."

"Trifle not with me, Houseman," said Aram, sternly; "I scarcely yet understand you. Do you mean to imply that yourself and the lawless associates you say you have joined, are lying out now for plunder in these parts?"

"You say it. Perhaps you heard of our exploits last night, some four miles hence?"

"Ha! was that villany yours?"

"Villany!" repeated Houseman, in a tone of sullen offence. "Come, Master Aram, these words must not pass between you and me, friends of such date and on such a footing."

"Talk not of the past," replied Aram, with a livid lip, "and call not those whom Destiny once, in despite of Nature, drove down her dark tide in a momentary companionship, by the name of friends. Friends we are not; but while we live there is a tie between us stronger than that of friendship."

"You speak truth and wisdom," said Houseman, sneeringly; "for my part, I care not what you call us,—friends or foes."

"Foes, foes!" exclaimed Aram, abruptly; "not that. Has life no medium in its ties? Pooh, pooh! not foes; *we* may not be foes to each other."

"It *were* foolish, at least at present," said Houseman, carelessly.

"Look you, Houseman," continued Aram, drawing his comrade from the path into a wilder part of the scene; and as he spoke, his words were couched in a more low and inward voice than heretofore,—"look you, I cannot live and have my life darkened thus by your presence. Is not the world wide enough for us both? Why haunt each other? What have you to gain from me? Can the thoughts that my sight recalls to you be brighter or more peaceful than those which start upon me when I gaze on you? Does not a ghastly air, a charnel-breath, hover about us both? Why perversely incur

a torture it is so easy to avoid? Leave me, leave these scenes. All earth spreads before you: choose your pursuits and your resting-place elsewhere, but grudge me not this little spot."

"I have no wish to disturb you, Eugene Aram, but I must live; and in order to live I must obey my companions: if I deserted them, it would be to starve. They will not linger long in this district,—a week, it may be, a fortnight at most; then, like the Indian animal, they will strip the leaves and desert the tree. In a word, after we have swept the country, we are gone."

"Houseman, Houseman!" said Aram, passionately, and frowning till his brows almost hid his eyes,—but that part of the orb which they did not hide seemed as living fire,—"I now implore, but I can threaten,—beware! Silence, I say!" and he stamped his foot violently on the ground, as he saw Houseman about to interrupt him; "listen to me throughout. Speak not to me of tarrying here,—speak not of days, of weeks, every hour of which would sound upon my ear like a death-knell. Dream not of a sojourn in these tranquil shades upon an errand of dread and violence,—the minions of the law aroused against you, girt with the chances of apprehension and a shameful death—"

"And a full confession of my past sins," interrupted Houseman, laughing wildly.

"Fiend, devil!" cried Aram, grasping his comrade by the throat, and shaking him with a vehemence that Houseman, though a man of great strength and sinew, impotently attempted to resist. "Breathe but another word of such import; dare to menace me with the vengeance of such a thing as thou,—and by the Heaven above us I will lay thee dead at my feet!"

"Release my throat, or you will commit murder," gasped Houseman, with difficulty, and growing already black in the face.

Aram suddenly relinquished his gripe and walked away with a hurried step, muttering to himself. He then returned to the side of Houseman, whose flesh still quivered either with rage or fear, and, his own self-possession completely restored,

stood gazing upon him with folded arms and his usual deep and passionless composure of countenance; and Houseman, if he could not boldly confront, did not altogether shrink from, his eye. So there and thus they stood, at a little distance from each other, both silent, and yet with something unutterably fearful in their silence.

"Houseman," said Aram at length, in a calm yet a hollow voice, "it may be that I was wrong; but there lives no man on earth, save you, who could thus stir my blood,—nor you with ease. And know, when you menace me, that it is not your menace that subdues or shakes my spirit; but that which robs my veins of their even tenor is that you should deem your menace *could* have such power, or that you—that any man—should arrogate to himself the thought that he could, by the prospect of whatsoever danger, humble the soul and curb the will of Eugene Aram. And now I am calm; say what you will, I cannot be vexed again."

"I have done," replied Houseman, coldly. "I have *nothing* to say; farewell!" and he moved away among the trees.

"Stay," cried Aram, in some agitation, "stay; we must not part thus. Look you, Houseman, you say you would starve should you leave your present associates. That may not be: quit them this night, this moment; leave the neighborhood, and the little in my power is at your will."

"As to that," said Houseman, dryly, "what is in your power is, I fear me, so little as not to counterbalance the advantages I should lose in quitting my companions. I expect to net some three hundreds before I leave these parts."

"Some three hundreds!" repeated Aram, recoiling; "that were indeed beyond me. I told you when we last met that it is only from an annual payment I draw the means of subsistence."

"I remember it. I do not ask you for money, Eugene Aram; these hands can maintain me," replied Houseman, smiling grimly. "I told you at once the sum I expected to receive *somewhere*, in order to prove that you need not vex your benevolent heart to afford me relief. I knew well the sum I named was out of your power,—unless, indeed, it be part of

the marriage portion you are about to receive with your bride. Fie, Aram! what secrets from your old friend! You see I pick up the news of the place without your confidence."

Again Aram's face worked and his lip quivered; but he conquered his passion with a surprising self-command, and answered mildly,—

"I do not know, Houseman, whether I shall receive any marriage portion whatsoever; if I do, I am willing to make some arrangement by which I could *engage* you to molest me no more. But it yet wants several days to my marriage: quit the neighborhood now, and a month hence let us meet again. Whatever at that time may be my resources, you shall frankly know them."

"It cannot be," said Houseman. "I quit not these districts without a certain sum, not in hope, but possession. But why interfere with me? I seek not my hoards in your coffer. Why so anxious that I should not breathe the same air as yourself?"

"It matters not," replied Aram, with a deep and ghastly voice; "but when you are near me, I feel as if I were with the dead: it is a spectre that I would exorcise in ridding me of your presence. Yet this is not what I now speak of. You are engaged, according to your own lips, in lawless and midnight schemes, in which you may (and the tide of chances runs towards that bourn) be seized by the hand of Justice."

"Ho!" said Houseman, sullenly, "and was it not for saying that you feared this, and its probable consequences, that you well-nigh stifled me but now? So truth may be said one moment with impunity, and the next at peril of life! These are the subtleties of you wise schoolmen, I suppose. Your Aristotles and your Zenos, your Platos and your Epicuruses, teach you notable distinctions, truly!"

"Peace!" said Aram; "are we at all times ourselves? Are the passions never our masters? You maddened me into anger. Behold, I am now calm; the subjects discussed between myself and you are of life and death: let us approach them with our senses collected and prepared. What, Houseman, are you bent upon your own destruction, as well as

mine, that you persevere in courses which *must* end in a death of shame?"

"What else can I do? I will not work, and I cannot live like you in a lone wilderness on a crust of bread. Nor is my name, like yours, mouthed by the praise of honest men,—my character is marked; those who once welcomed me shun me now. I have no resource for society (for *I* cannot face myself alone) but in the fellowship of men like myself, whom the world has thrust from its pale. I have no resource for bread save in the pursuits that are branded by justice and accompanied with snares and danger. What would you have me do?"

"Is it not better," said Aram, "to enjoy peace and safety upon a small but certain pittance than to live thus from hand to mouth,—vibrating from wealth to famine, and the rope around your neck, sleeping and awake? Seek your relation, —in that quarter you yourself said your character was not branded,—live with him, and know the quiet of easy days; and I promise you that if aught be in my power to make your lot more suitable to your wants, so long as you lead the life of honest men it shall be freely yours. Is not this better, Houseman, than a short and sleepless career of dread?"

"Aram," answered Houseman, "are you, in truth, calm enough to hear me speak? I warn you that if again you forget yourself and lay hands on me—"

"Threaten not, threaten not," interrupted Aram, "but proceed; all within me is now still and cold as ice. Proceed without fear or scruple."

"Be it so. We do not love one another: you have affected contempt for me; and I—I—no matter—I am not a stone or a stick, that I should not feel. You have scorned me, you have outraged me, you have not assumed towards me even the decent hypocrisies of prudence; yet now you would ask of me the conduct, the sympathy, the forbearance, the concession of friendship. You wish that I should quit these scenes, where to my judgment a certain advantage awaits me, solely that I may lighten your breast of its selfish fears. You dread the dangers that await me on your own account. And in my apprehension you forbode your own doom. You ask me—

nay, not ask, you would command, you would awe me — to sacrifice my will and wishes in order to soothe your anxieties and strengthen your own safety. Mark me, Eugene Aram, I have been treated as a tool, and I will not be governed as a friend. I will not stir from the vicinity of your home till my designs be fulfilled; I enjoy, I hug myself in your torments. I exult in the terror with which you will hear of each new enterprise, each new daring, each new triumph of myself and my gallant comrades. And now I am avenged for the affront you put upon me."

Though Aram trembled with suppressed passions from limb to limb, his voice was still calm, and his lip even wore a smile as he answered,—

"I was prepared for this, Houseman; you utter nothing that surprises or appals me. You hate me: it is natural; men united as we are, rarely look on each other with a friendly or a pitying eye. But, Houseman, I KNOW YOU! — you are a man of vehement passions, but interest with you is yet stronger than passion. If not, our conference is over. Go, and do your worst."

"You are right, most learned scholar; I can fetter the tiger within, in his deadliest rage, by a golden chain."

"Well, then, Houseman, it is not your interest to betray me — my destruction is your own."

"I grant it; but if I am apprehended, and to be hung for robbery?"

"It will be no longer an object to you to care for my safety. Assuredly I comprehend this. But my interest induces me to wish that you be removed from the peril of apprehension; and your interest replies that if you can obtain equal advantages in security, you would forego advantages accompanied by peril. Say what we will, wander as we will, it is to this point that we must return at last."

"Nothing can be clearer; and were you a rich man, Eugene Aram, or could you obtain your bride's dowry (no doubt a respectable sum) in advance, the arrangement might at once be settled."

Aram gasped for breath and, as usual with him in emotion,

made several strides, muttering rapidly and indistinctly to himself, and then returned.

"Even were this possible, it would be but a short reprieve. I could not trust you; the sum would be spent, and I again in the state to which you have compelled me now, but without the means again to relieve myself. No, no; if the blow must fall, be it so one day as another."

"As you will," said Houseman; "but — " Just at that moment a long shrill whistle sounded below, as from the water. Houseman paused abruptly. "That signal is from my comrades; I must away. Hark, again! Farewell, Aram!"

"Farewell, if it must be so," said Aram, in a tone of dogged sullenness; "but to-morrow, should you know of any means by which I could feel secure, beyond the security of your own word, from your future molestation, I might — Yet how?"

"To-morrow," said Houseman, "I cannot answer for myself; it is not always that I can leave my comrades, — a natural jealousy makes them suspicious of the absence of their friends. Yet hold: *the night* after to-morrow, the Sabbath night, most virtuous Aram, I can meet you; but not here, — some miles hence. You know the foot of the Devil's Crag, by the waterfall: it is a spot quiet and shaded enough in all conscience for our interview; and I will tell you a secret I would trust no other man (hark, again!), — it is close by our present lurking-place. Meet me there. It would, indeed, be pleasanter to hold our conference under shelter, but just at present I would rather not trust myself beneath any honest man's roof in this neighborhood. Adieu! on Sunday night, one hour before midnight."

The robber, for such then he was, waved his hand and hurried away in the direction from which the signal seemed to come.

Aram gazed after him, but with vacant eyes, and remained for several minutes rooted to the spot, as if the very life had left him.

"The Sabbath night!" said he, at length, moving slowly on; "and I must spin forth my existence in trouble and fear till then. *Till* then! What remedy can I *then* invent? It

is clear that I can have no dependence on his word, if won; and I have not even aught wherewith to buy it. But courage, courage, my heart, and work thou, my busy brain,—ye have never failed me yet!"

CHAPTER III.

FRESH ALARM IN THE VILLAGE.—LESTER'S VISIT TO ARAM.—A TRAIT OF DELICATE KINDNESS IN THE STUDENT.—MADELINE.—HER PRONENESS TO CONFIDE.—THE CONVERSATION BETWEEN LESTER AND ARAM.—THE PERSONS BY WHOM IT IS INTERRUPTED.

> Not my own fears, nor the prophetic soul
> Of the wide world, dreaming on things to come,
> Can yet the lease of my true love control.
>
> SHAKSPEARE: *Sonnets.*

Commend me to their loves, and, I am proud, say, that my occasions have found time to use 'em toward a supply of money: let the request be fifty talents.—*Timon of Athens.*

The next morning the whole village was alive and bustling with terror and consternation. Another, and a yet more daring, robbery had been committed in the neighborhood, and the police of the county town had been summoned, and were now busy in search of the offenders. Aram had been early disturbed by the officious anxiety of some of his neighbors, and it wanted yet some hours of noon when Lester himself came to seek and consult with the student.

Aram was alone in his large and gloomy chamber, surrounded, as usual, by his books, but not, as usual, engaged in their contents. With his face leaning on his hand, and his eyes gazing on a dull fire that crept heavily upward through the damp fuel, he sat by his hearth, listless, but wrapped in thought.

"Well, my friend," said Lester, displacing the books from

one of the chairs, and drawing the seat near the student's, "you have ere this heard the news,—and, indeed, in a county so quiet as ours, these outrages appear the more fearful from their being so unlooked for. We must set a guard on the village, Aram, and you *must* leave this defenceless hermitage and come down to us,—not for your own sake, but consider you will be an additional safeguard to Madeline. You will lock up the house, dismiss your poor old governante to her friends in the village, and walk back with me at once to the Hall."

Aram turned uneasily in his chair. "I feel your kindness," said he, after a pause, "but I cannot accept it; Madeline—" He stopped short at that name, and added, in an altered voice: "No, I will be one of the watch, Lester, I will look to her—to your—safety; but I cannot sleep under another roof. I am superstitious, Lester,—superstitious. I have made a vow,—a foolish one, perhaps; but I dare not break it. And my vow binds me not to pass a night, save on indispensable and urgent necessity, anywhere but in my own home."

"But there *is* necessity."

"My conscience says not," said Aram, smiling. "Peace, my good friend; we cannot conquer men's foibles, or wrestle with men's scruples."

Lester in vain attempted to shake Aram's resolution on this head; he found him immovable, and gave up the effort in despair.

"Well," said he, "at all events we have set up a watch, and can spare you a couple of defenders. They shall reconnoitre in the neighborhood of your house if you persevere in your determination; and this will serve, in some slight measure, to satisfy poor Madeline."

"Be it so," replied Aram; "and dear Madeline herself, *is* she so alarmed?"

And now, in spite of all the more wearing and haggard thoughts that preyed upon his breast, and the dangers by which he conceived himself beset, the student's face, as he listened with eager attention to every word that Lester uttered concerning his daughter, testified how alive he yet was to the least incident that related to Madeline, and how easily her

innocent and peaceful remembrance could allure him from himself.

"This room," said Lester, looking round, "will be, I conclude, after Madeline's own heart; but will you always suffer her here? Students do not sometimes like even the gentlest interruption."

"I have not forgotten that Madeline's comfort requires some more cheerful retreat than this," said Aram, with a melancholy expression of countenance. "Follow me, Lester: I meant this for a little surprise to her. But Heaven only knows if I shall ever show it to herself."

"Why, what doubt of that can even your boding temper indulge?"

"We are as the wanderers in the desert," answered Aram, "who are taught wisely to distrust their own senses: that which they gaze upon as the waters of existence is often but a faithless vapor that would lure them to destruction."

In thus speaking, he had traversed the room, and opening a door, showed a small chamber with which it communicated, and which Aram had fitted up with evident and not ungraceful care. Every article of furniture that Madeline might most fancy, he had procured from the neighboring town. And some of the lighter and more attractive books that he possessed, were ranged around on shelves, above which were vases, intended for flowers; the window opened upon a little plot that had been lately broken up into a small garden, and was already intersected with walks, and rich with shrubs.

There was something in this chamber that so entirely contrasted the one it adjoined, something so light and cheerful and even gay in its decoration and general aspect, that Lester uttered an exclamation of delight and surprise. And indeed it did appear to him touching that this austere scholar, so wrapped in thought and so inattentive to the common forms of life, should have manifested so much of tender and delicate consideration. In another it would have been nothing; but in Aram it was a trait that brought involuntary tears to the eyes of the good Lester. Aram observed them; he walked hastily away to the window, and sighed heavily. This did

not escape his friend's notice, and after commenting on the attractions of the little room, Lester said,—

"You seem oppressed in spirits, Eugene: can anything have chanced to disturb you,—beyond, at least, these alarms, which are enough to agitate the nerves of the hardiest of us?"

"No," said Aram; "I had no sleep last night, and my health is easily affected, and with my health my mind. But let us go to Madeline; the sight of her will revive me."

They then strolled down to the manor-house, and met by the way a band of the younger heroes of the village, who had volunteered to act as a patrol, and who were now marshalled by Peter Dealtry, in a fit of heroic enthusiasm.

Although it was broad daylight, and consequently there was little cause of immediate alarm, the worthy publican carried on his shoulder a musket on full cock; and each moment he kept peeping about, as if not only every bush, but every blade of grass, contained an ambuscade ready to spring up the instant he was off his guard. By his side the redoubted Jacobina, who had transferred to her new master the attachment she had originally possessed for the corporal, trotted peeringly along, her tail perpendicularly cocked, and her ears moving to and fro with a most incomparable air of vigilant sagacity. The cautious Peter every now and then checked her ardor as she was about to quicken her step and enliven the march by gambols better adapted to serener times.

"Soho, Jacobina, soho! gently, girl, gently; thou little knowest the dangers that may beset thee. Come up, my good fellows, come to The Spotted Dog,—I will tap a barrel on purpose for you; and we will settle the plan of defence for the night. Jacobina, come in, I say; come in,—

"'Lest, like a lion, they thee tear,
And rend in pieces small,
While there is none to succor thee,
And rid thee out of thrall.'

What ho, there! Oh! I beg your honor's pardon! Your servant, Mr. Aram."

"What, patrolling already?" said the squire. "Your men will be tired before they are wanted; reserve their ardor for the night."

"Oh, your honor, I have only been beating up for recruits; and we are going to consult a bit at home. Ah! what a pity the corporal is n't here; he would have been a tower of strength unto the righteous. But howsomever, I do my best to supply his place. — Jacobina, child, be still. — I can't say as I knows the musket-sarvice, your honor; but I fancies as how we can do it extemporaneous-like at a pinch."

"A bold heart, Peter, is the best preparation," said the squire.

"And," quoth Peter, quickly, "what saith the worshipful Mister Sternhold, in the forty-fifth Psalm, fourth verse? —

"'Go forth with godly speed, in meekness, truth, and right,
And thy right hand shall thee instruct in works of dreadful might.'"

Peter quoted these verses, especially the last, with a truculent frown and a brandishing of the musket that surprisingly encouraged the hearts of his little armament; and with a general murmur of enthusiasm the warlike band marched off to The Spotted Dog.

Lester and his companion found Madeline and Ellinor standing at the window of the hall, and Madeline's light step was the first that sprang forward to welcome their return; even the face of the student brightened when he saw the kindling eye, the parted lip, the buoyant form, from which the pure and innocent gladness she felt on seeing him broke forth.

There was a remarkable *trustfulness* in Madeline's disposition. Thoughtful and grave as she was by nature, she was yet ever inclined to the more sanguine colorings of life; she never turned to the future with fear, — a placid sentiment of hope slept at her heart; she was one who surrendered herself with a fond and implicit faith to the guidance of all she loved, and to the chances of life. It was a sweet indolence of the mind which made one of her most beautiful traits of character: there is something so unselfish in tempers reluctant to

despond. You see that such persons are not occupied with their own existence; they are not fretting the calm of the present life with the egotisms of care and conjecture and calculation; if they learn anxiety, it is for another: but in *the heart* of that other how entire is their trust!

It was this disposition in Madeline which perpetually charmed, and yet perpetually wrung, the soul of her wild lover; and as she now delightedly hung upon his arm, uttering her joy at seeing him safe, and presently forgetting that there ever had been cause for alarm, his heart was filled with the most gloomy sense of horror and desolation. "What," thought he, "if this poor unconscious girl could dream that at this moment I am girded with peril from which I see no ultimate escape? Delay it as I will, it seems as if the blow must come at last. What if she could think how fearful is my interest in these outrages,—that in all probability, if their authors are detected, there is one who will drag me into their ruin; that I am given over, bound and blinded, into the hands of another; and that other a man steeled to mercy, and withheld from my destruction by a thread,—a thread that a blow on himself would snap. Great God! wherever I turn, I see despair. And she,—she clings to me; and beholding me, thinks the whole earth is filled with hope!"

While these thoughts darkened his mind, Madeline drew him onward into the more sequestered walks of the garden, to show him some flowers she had transplanted. And when an hour afterwards he returned to the Hall, so soothing had been the influence of her looks and words upon Aram that if he had not forgotten the situation in which he stood, he had at least calmed himself to regard with a steady eye the chances of escape.

The meal of the day passed as cheerfully as usual; and when Aram and his host were left over their abstemious potations, the former proposed a walk before the evening deepened. Lester readily consented, and they sauntered into the fields. The squire soon perceived that something was on Aram's mind, of which he felt evident embarrassment in ridding himself; at length the student said, rather abruptly,—

"My dear friend, I am but a bad beggar, and therefore let me get over my request as expeditiously as possible. You said to me once that you intended bestowing some dowry upon Madeline,—a dowry I would and could willingly dispense with; but should you of that sum be now able to spare me some portion as a loan, should you have some three hundred pounds with which you could accommodate me—"

"Say no more, Eugene, say no more," interrupted the squire; "you can have double that amount. I ought to have foreseen that your preparations for your approaching marriage must have occasioned you some inconvenience: you can have six hundred pounds from me to-morrow."

Aram's eyes brightened. "It is too much, too much, my generous friend," said he,—"the half suffices; but—but, a debt of old standing presses me urgently, and to-morrow, or rather Monday morning, *is* the time fixed for payment."

"Consider it arranged," said Lester, putting his hand on Aram's arm; and then, leaning on it gently, he added, "and now that we are on this subject, let me tell you what I intended as a gift to you and my dear Madeline. It is but small, but my estates are rigidly entailed on Walter, and of poor value in themselves, and it is half the savings of many years."

The squire then named a sum which, however small it may seem to our reader, was not considered a despicable portion for the daughter of a small country squire at that day, and was in reality a generous sacrifice for one whose whole income was scarcely, at the most, seven hundred a year. The sum mentioned doubled that now to be lent, and which was of course a part of it; an equal portion was reserved for Ellinor.

"And to tell you the truth," said the squire, "you must give me some little time for the remainder; for not thinking, some months ago, it would be so soon wanted, I laid out eighteen hundred pounds in the purchase of Winclose farm, six of which (the remainder of your share) I can pay off at the end of the year: the other twelve, Ellinor's portion, will remain a mortgage on the farm itself. And between us,"

added the squire, "I do hope that I need be in no hurry respecting her, dear girl. When Walter returns, I trust matters may be arranged in a manner and through a channel that would gratify the most cherished wish of my heart. I am convinced that Ellinor is exactly suited to him; and unless he should lose his senses for some one else in the course of his travels, I trust that he will not be long returned before he will make the same discovery. I think of writing to him very shortly after your marriage, and making him promise, at all events, to revisit us at Christmas. Ah! Eugene, we shall be a happy party then, I trust. And be assured that we shall beat up your quarters, and put your hospitality and Madeline's housewifery to the test."

Therewith the good squire ran on for some minutes in the warmth of his heart, dilating on the fireside prospects before them, and rallying the student on those secluded habits which he promised him he should no longer indulge with impunity.

"But it is growing dark," said he, awakening from the theme which had carried him away, "and by this time Peter and our patrol will be at the Hall; I told them to look up in the evening, in order to appoint their several duties and stations. Let us turn back. Indeed, Aram, I can assure you that I, for my own part, have some strong reasons to take precautions against any attack; for besides the old family plate (though that 's not much), I have — you know the bureau in the parlor to the left of the hall? — well, I have in that bureau three hundred guineas, which I have not as yet been able to take to safe hands at ——, and which, by the way, will be yours to-morrow. So you see it would be no light misfortune to me to be robbed."

"Hist!" said Aram, stopping short; "I think I heard steps on the other side of the hedge."

The squire listened, but heard nothing; the senses of his companion were, however, remarkably acute, more especially that of hearing.

"There is certainly some one, — nay, I catch the steps of *two* persons," whispered he to Lester.

"Let us come round the hedge by the gap below."

They both quickened their pace; and gaining the other side of the hedge, did indeed perceive two men, in carters' frocks, strolling on towards the village.

"They are strangers too," said the squire, suspiciously; "not Grassdale men. Humph! could they have overheard us, think you?"

"If men whose business it is to overhear their neighbors,—yes; but not if they be honest men," answered Aram, in one of those shrewd remarks which he often uttered, and which seemed almost incompatible with the tenor of those quiet and abstruse pursuits that generally deaden the mind to worldly wisdom.

They had now approached the strangers, who, however, appeared mere rustic clowns, and who pulled off their hats with the wonted obeisance of their tribe.

"Holla! my men," said the squire, assuming his magisterial air; for the mildest squire in Christendom can play the bashaw when he remembers he is a justice of the peace. "Holla! what are you doing here this time of the day? You are not after any good, I fear."

"We ax pardon, your honor," said the elder clown, in the peculiar accent of the country, "but we be come from Gladsmuir, and be going to work at Squire Nixon's, at Mowhall, on Monday; so as I has a brother living on the green afore the squire's, we be a-going to sleep at his house to-night and spend the Sunday there, your honor."

"Humph, humph! What's your name?"

"Joe Wood, your honor; and this here chap is Will Hutchings."

"Well, well, go along with you," said the squire; "and mind what you are about. I should not be surprised if you snared one of Squire Nixon's hares by the way."

"Oh, well and indeed, your honor—"

"Go along, go along," said the squire, and away went the men.

"They seem honest bumpkins enough," observed Lester.

"It would have pleased me better," said Aram, "had the speaker of the two particularized less; and you observed that

he seemed eager not to let his companion speak,—that is a little suspicious."

"Shall I call them back?" asked the squire.

"Why, it is scarcely worth while," said Aram; "perhaps I over-refine. And now I look again at them, they seem really what they affect to be. No, it is useless to molest the poor wretches any more. There is something, Lester, humbling to human pride in a rustic's life. It grates against the heart to think of the tone in which we unconsciously permit ourselves to address him. We see in him humanity in its simple state: it is a sad thought to feel that we despise it; that all we respect in our species is what has been created by art,—the gaudy dress, the glittering equipage, or even the cultivated intellect; the mere and naked material of nature we eye with indifference or trample on with disdain. Poor child of toil, from the gray dawn to the setting sun one long task; no idea elicited, no thought awakened beyond those that suffice to make him the machine of others,—the serf of the hard soil! And then, too, mark how we scowl upon his scanty holidays, how we hedge in his mirth with laws, and turn his hilarity into crime! We make the whole of the gay world, wherein we walk and take our pleasure, to him a place of snares and perils. If he leave his labor for an instant, in that instant how many temptations spring up to him! And yet we have no mercy for *his* errors; the jail, the transport-ship, the gallows,—those are the illustrations of our lecture-books, those the bounds of every vista that we cut through the labyrinth of our laws. Ah, fie on the disparities of the world! They cripple the heart, they blind the sense, they concentrate the thousand links between man and man into the two basest of earthly ties,—servility and pride. Methinks the devils laugh out when they hear us tell the boor that his soul is as glorious and eternal as our own, when in the grinding drudgery of his life not a spark of that soul can be called forth,—when it sleeps, walled round in its lumpish clay, from the cradle to the grave, without a dream to stir the deadness of its torpor."

"And yet, Aram," said Lester, "the lords of science have their ills. Exalt the soul as you will, you cannot raise it

above pain. Better, perhaps, to let it sleep, since in waking it looks only upon a world of trial."

"You say well, you say well," said Aram, smiting his heart; "and I suffered a foolish sentiment to carry me beyond the sober boundaries of our daily sense."

CHAPTER IV.

MILITARY PREPARATIONS.—THE COMMANDER AND HIS MEN.—ARAM IS PERSUADED TO PASS THE NIGHT AT THE MANOR-HOUSE.

Falstaff. Bid my lieutenant Peto meet me at the town's end. . . . I pressed me none but such toasts and butter, with hearts in their bellies no bigger than pins' heads. — *First Part of King Henry IV.*

They had scarcely reached the manor-house before the rain, which the clouds had portended throughout the whole day, began to descend in torrents, and, to use the strong expression of the Latin poet, the night *rushed* down, black and sudden, over the face of the earth.

The new watch were not by any means the hardy and experienced soldiery by whom rain and darkness are unheeded. They looked with great dismay upon the character of the night in which their campaign was to commence. The valorous Peter, who had sustained his own courage by repeated applications to a little bottle which he never failed to carry about him in all the more bustling and enterprising occasions of life, endeavored, but with partial success, to maintain the ardor of his band. Seated in the servants' hall of the manor-house in a large armchair, Jacobina on his knee, and his trusty musket, which, to the great terror of the womankind, had never been uncocked throughout the day, still grasped in his right hand, while the stock was grounded on the floor, he indulged in martial harangues, plentifully interlarded with plagiarisms from the worshipful translations of Messrs. Sternhold and Hopkins, and psalmodic versions of a more doubtful

authorship. And when at the hour of ten, which was the appointed time, he led his warlike force, which consisted of six rustics armed with sticks of incredible thickness, three guns, one pistol, a broadsword, and a pitchfork (the last a weapon likely to be more effectively used than all the rest put together),—when at the hour of ten he led them up to the room above, where they were to be passed in review before the critical eye of the squire, with Jacobina leading the on-guard, you could not fancy a prettier picture for a hero in a little way than mine host of The Spotted Dog.

His hat was fastened tight on his brows by a blue pocket-handkerchief; he wore a spencer of a light-brown drugget, a world too loose, above a leather jerkin; his breeches, of corduroy, were met all of a sudden, half way up the thigh, by a detachment of Hessians, formerly in the service of the corporal, and bought some time since by Peter Dealtry to wear when employed in shooting snipes for the squire, to whom he occasionally performed the office of gamekeeper; suspended round his wrist by a bit of black ribbon was his constable's baton. He shouldered his musket gallantly, and he carried his person as erect as if the least deflection from its perpendicularity were to cost him his life. One may judge of the revolution that had taken place in the village when so peaceable a man as Peter Dealtry was thus metamorphosed into a commander-in-chief! The rest of the regiment hung sheepishly back, each trying to get as near to the door and as far from the ladies as possible. But Peter, having made up his mind that a hero should only look straight forward, did not condescend to turn round to perceive the irregularity of his line. Secure in his own existence, he stood truculently forth, facing the squire, and prepared to receive his plaudits.

Madeline and Aram sat apart at one corner of the hearth, and Ellinor leaned over the chair of the former, the mirth that she struggled to suppress from being audible mantling over her arch face and laughing eyes; while the squire, taking the pipe from his mouth, turned round on his easy-chair and nodded complacently to the little corps and the great commander.

"We are all ready now, your honor," said Peter, in a voice that did not seem to belong to his body, so big did it sound —"all hot, all eager."

"Why, you yourself are a host, Peter," said Ellinor, with affected gravity; "your sight alone would frighten an army of robbers. Who could have thought you could assume so military an air? The corporal himself was never so upright!"

"I have practised my present *n*attitude all the day, miss," said Peter, proudly; "and I believe I may now say as Mr. Sternhold says, or sings, in the twenty-sixth Psalm, verse twelfth,—

> "'My foot is stayed for all essays,
> It standeth well and right;
> Wherefore to God will I give praise
> In all the people's sight!'

Jacobina, behave yourself, child! I don't think, your honor, that we miss the corporal so much as I fancied at first, for we all does very well without him."

"Indeed, you are a most worthy substitute, Peter. And now, Nell, just reach me my hat and cloak; I will set you at your posts. You will have an ugly night of it."

"Very indeed, your honor," cried all the army, speaking for the first time.

"Silence! order! discipline!" said Peter, gruffly. "March!"

But instead of *marching* across the hall, the recruits huddled up one after the other, like a flock of geese whom Jacobina might be supposed to have set in motion, and each scraping to the ladies as they shuffled, sneaked, bundled, and bustled out at the door.

"We are well guarded now, Madeline," said Ellinor. "I fancy we may go to sleep as safely as if there were not a housebreaker in the world."

"Why," said Madeline, "let us trust they will be more efficient than they seem; though I cannot persuade myself that we shall really need them. One might almost as well conceive a tiger in our arbor as a robber in Grassdale. But

dear, dear Eugene, do not, do not leave us this night; Walter's room is ready for you, and if it were only to walk across that valley in such weather, it would be cruel to leave us. Let me beseech you. Come, you cannot, you dare not, refuse me such a favor."

Aram pleaded his vow, but it was overruled; Madeline proved herself a most exquisite casuist in setting it aside. One by one his objections were broken down; and how, as he gazed into those eyes, could he keep any resolution that Madeline wished him to break? The power she possessed over him seemed exactly in proportion to his impregnability to every one else. The surface on which the diamond cuts its easy way will yield to no more ignoble instrument; it is easy to shatter it, but by only one pure and precious gem can it be shaped. But if Aram remained at the house this night, how could he well avoid a similar compliance the next? And on the next was his interview with Houseman. This reason for resistance yielded to Madeline's soft entreaties,—he trusted to the time to furnish him with excuses; and when Lester returned, Madeline, with a triumphant air, informed him that Aram had consented to be their guest for the night.

"Your influence is, indeed, greater than mine," said Lester, wringing his hat as the delicate fingers of Ellinor loosened his cloak; "yet one can scarcely think our friend sacrifices much in concession, after proving the weather without. I should pity our poor patrol most exceedingly, if I were not thoroughly assured that within two hours every one of them will have quietly slunk home; and even Peter himself, when he has exhausted his bottle, will be the first to set the example. However, I have stationed two of the men near our house, and the rest at equal distances along the village."

"Do you really think they will go home, sir?" said Ellinor, in a little alarm. "Why, they would be worse than I thought them if they were driven to bed by the rain. I knew they could not stand a pistol, but a shower, however hard, I did imagine would scarcely quench their valor."

"Never mind, girl," said Lester, gayly chucking her under the chin, "we are quite strong enough now to resist them.

You see Madeline has grown as brave as a lioness. Come, girls, come; let's have supper, and stir up the fire. And, Nell, where are my slippers?"

And thus on the little family scene — the cheerful wood fire flickering against the polished wainscot; the supper-table arranged, the squire drawing his oak chair towards it, Ellinor mixing his negus; and Aram and Madeline, though three times summoned to the table, and having three times answered to the summons, still lingering apart by the hearth — let us drop the curtain.

We have only, ere we close our chapter, to observe that when Lester conducted Aram to his chamber he placed in his hands an order, payable at the county town, for three hundred pounds. "The rest," he said in a whisper, "is below, where I mentioned; and there, in my secret drawer, it had better rest till the morning."

The good squire then, putting his finger to his lip, hurried away to avoid the thanks which, indeed, whatever gratitude he might feel, Aram was ill able to express.

CHAPTER V.

THE SISTERS ALONE. — THE GOSSIP OF LOVE. — AN ALARM AND AN EVENT.

Juliet. My true love has grown to such excess,
I cannot sum up half my sum of wealth. — *Romeo and Juliet.*

Eros. Oh, a man in arms;
His weapon drawn too! — *The False One.*

It was a custom with the two sisters, when they repaired to their chamber for the night, to sit conversing, sometimes even for hours, before they finally retired to bed. This, indeed, was the usual time for their little confidences and their mutual dilations over those hopes and plans for the future

which always occupy the larger share of the thoughts and conversation of the young. I do not know anything in the world more lovely than such conferences between two beings who have no secrets to relate but what arise, all fresh, from the springs of a guiltless heart,—those pure and beautiful mysteries of an unsullied nature which warm us to hear; and we think with a sort of wonder, when we feel how arid experience has made ourselves, that so much of the dew and sparkle of existence still lingers in the nooks and valleys which are as yet virgin of the sun and of mankind.

The sisters this night were more than commonly indifferent to sleep. Madeline sat by the small but bright hearth of the chamber in her night-dress; and Ellinor, who was much prouder of her sister's beauty than her own, was employed in knotting up the long and lustrous hair, which fell in rich luxuriance over Madeline's throat and shoulders.

"There certainly never *was* such beautiful hair!" said Ellinor, admiringly. "And, let me see,—yes,—on Thursday fortnight I may be dressing it, perhaps for the last time! Heigho!"

"Don't flatter yourself that you are so near the end of your troublesome duties," said Madeline, with her pretty smile, which had been much brighter and more frequent of late than it was formerly wont to be; so that Lester had remarked that Madeline really appeared to have become the lighter and gayer of the two.

"You will often come to stay with us for weeks together, at least till—till you have a double right to be mistress here. Ah! my poor hair,—you need not pull it so hard."

"Be quiet, then," said Ellinor, half laughing and wholly blushing.

"Trust me, I have not been in love myself without learning its signs; and I venture to prophesy that within six months you will come to consult me whether or not—for there is a great deal to be said on both sides of the question—you can make up your mind to sacrifice your own wishes and marry Walter Lester. Ah! gently, gently! Nell—"

"Promise to be quiet."

"I will, I will; but you began it."

As Ellinor now finished her task and kissed her sister's forehead, she sighed deeply.

"Happy Walter!" said Madeline.

"I was not sighing for Walter, but for you."

"For me? Impossible! I cannot imagine any part of my *future* life that can cost you a sigh. Ah, that I were more worthy of my happiness!"

"Well, then," said Ellinor, "I sighed for myself,—I sighed to think we should so soon be parted, and that the continuance of your society would then depend, not on our mutual love, but on the will of another."

"What, Ellinor, and can you suppose that Eugene—my Eugene—would not welcome you as warmly as myself? Ah! you misjudge him; I know you have not yet perceived how tender a heart lies beneath all that melancholy and reserve."

"I feel, indeed," said Ellinor, warmly, "as if it were impossible that one whom you love should not be all that is good and noble. Yet if this reserve of his should increase, as is at least possible, with increasing years; if our society should become again, as it once was, distasteful to him,—should I not lose you, Madeline?"

"But his reserve cannot increase: do you not perceive how much it is softened already? Ah! be assured that I will charm it away."

"But what is the cause of the melancholy that even now, at times, evidently preys upon him? Has he never revealed it to you?"

"It is merely the early and long habit of solitude and study, Ellinor," replied Madeline. "And shall I own to you I would scarcely wish *that* away? His tenderness itself seems linked with his melancholy,—it is like a sad but gentle music, that brings tears into our eyes; but who would change it for gayer airs?"

"Well, I must own," said Ellinor, reluctantly, "that I no longer wonder at your infatuation; I can no longer chide you as I once did,—there is, assuredly, something in his voice, his look, which irresistibly sinks into the heart. And there

are moments when, what with his eyes and forehead, his countenance seems more beautiful, more impressive, than any I ever beheld. Perhaps, too, for you, it is better that your lover should be no longer in the first flush of youth. Your nature seems to require something to venerate as well as to love. And I have ever observed, at prayers, that you seem more especially rapt and carried beyond yourself in those passages which call peculiarly for worship and adoration."

"Yes, dearest," said Madeline, fervently. "I own that Eugene is of all beings, not only of all whom I ever knew, but of whom I ever dreamed or imagined, the one that I am most fitted to love and to appreciate. His wisdom — but, more than that, the lofty tenor of his mind — calls forth all that is highest and best in my own nature. I feel exalted when I listen to him; and yet, how gentle, with all that nobleness! And to think that *he* should descend to love me, and *so* to love me! It is as if a star were to leave its sphere!"

"Hark! one o'clock," said Ellinor, as the deep voice of the clock told the first hour of morning. "Heavens! how much louder the winds rave! And how the heavy sleet drives against the window! Our poor watch without — But you may be sure my father was right, and they are safe at home by this time; nor is it likely, I should think, that even robbers would be abroad in such weather!"

"I have heard," said Madeline, "that robbers generally choose these dark, stormy nights for their designs; but I confess I don't feel much alarm, and *he* is in the house. Draw nearer to the fire, Ellinor; is it not pleasant to see how serenely it burns, while the storm howls without? It is like my Eugene's soul, luminous and lone amidst the roar and darkness of this unquiet world!"

"There spoke himself," said Ellinor, smiling to perceive how invariably women who love, imitate the tone of the beloved one. And Madeline felt it, and smiled too.

"Hist!" said Ellinor, abruptly; "did you not hear a low, grating noise below? Ah! the winds *now* prevent your catching the sound; but hush, hush! The wind pauses; there it is again!"

"Yes, I hear it," said Madeline, turning pale; "it seems in the little parlor,—a continued, harsh, but very low, noise. Good heavens! it seems at the window below."

"It is like a file," whispered Ellinor; "perhaps—"

"You are right," said Madeline, suddenly rising,—"it is a file, and at the bars my father had fixed against the window yesterday. Let us go down and alarm the house."

"No, no; for Heaven's sake don't be so rash," cried Ellinor, losing all presence of mind. "Hark! the sound ceases; there is a louder noise below, and steps. Let us lock the door."

But Madeline was of that fine and high order of spirit which rises in proportion to danger; and calming her sister as well as she could, she seized the light with a steady hand, opened the door, and (Ellinor still clinging to her) passed the landing-place and hastened to her father's room,—he slept at the opposite corner of the staircase. Aram's chamber was at the extreme end of the house. Before she reached the door of Lester's apartment the noise below grew loud and distinct,—a scuffle, voices, curses, and now the sound of a pistol! In a minute more the whole house was stirring. Lester in his night-robe, his broadsword in his hand, and his long gray hair floating behind, was the first to appear; the servants, old and young, male and female, now came thronging simultaneously round; and in a general body, Lester several paces at their head, his daughters following next to him, they rushed to the apartment whence the noise, now suddenly stilled, had proceeded.

The window was opened, evidently by force; an instrument like a wedge was fixed in the bureau containing Lester's money, and seemed to have been left there, as if the person using it had been disturbed before the design for which it was introduced had been accomplished; and (the only evidence of life) Aram stood, dressed, in the centre of the room, a pistol in his left hand, a sword in his right. A bludgeon severed in two lay at his feet, and on the floor within two yards of him, towards the window, drops of blood, yet warm, showed that the pistol had not been discharged in vain.

"And is it you, my brave friend, whom I have to thank for our safety?" cried Lester, in great emotion.

"You, Eugene!" repeated Madeline, sinking on his breast.

"But thanks hereafter," continued Lester; "let us now to the pursuit. Perhaps the villain may have perished beneath your bullet."

"Ha!" muttered Aram, who had hitherto seemed unconscious of all around him, so fixed had been his eye, so colorless his cheek, so motionless his posture. "Ha! say you so? Think you I have slain him? No, it cannot be,—the ball did not slay; I saw him stagger, but he rallied,—not so one who receives a mortal wound. Ha! ha! there is blood, you say: that is true; but what then? It is not the first wound that kills, you must strike again. Pooh, pooh! what is a little blood?"

While he was thus muttering, Lester and the more active of the servants had already sallied through the window; but the night was so intensely dark that they could not see a step beyond them. Lester returned, therefore, in a few moments, and met Aram's dark eye fixed upon him with an unutterable expression of anxiety.

"You have *found* no one," said he,—"no dying man? Ha! well, well, well! they must *both* have escaped; the night must favor them."

"Do you fancy the villain was severely wounded?"

"Not so,—I trust not so; he seemed able to— But stop, O God! stop! your foot is dabbling in blood,—blood shed by *me!* Off! off!"

Lester moved aside with a quick abhorrence as he saw that his feet were indeed smearing the blood over the polished and slippery surface of the oak boards; and in moving he stumbled against a dark lantern in which the light still burned, and which the robbers in their flight had left.

"Yes," said Aram, observing it, "it was by that, their own light, that I saw them,—saw their faces; and—and [bursting into a loud, wild laugh] they were *both* strangers!"

"Ah! I thought so, I knew so," said Lester, plucking the instrument from the bureau. "I knew they could be no

Grassdale men. What did you fancy they could be? But —bless me, Madeline— What ho! help! Aram, she has fainted at your feet!"

And it was indeed true and remarkable that so utter had been the absorption of Aram's mind that he had been not only insensible to the entrance of Madeline, but even unconscious that she had thrown herself on his breast. And she, overcome by her feelings, had slid to the ground from that momentary resting-place, in a swoon which Lester, in the general tumult and confusion, was now the first to perceive.

At this exclamation, at the sound of Madeline's name, the blood rushed back from Aram's heart, where it had gathered, icy and curdling; and awakened thoroughly and at once to himself, he knelt down, and weaving his arms around her, supported her head on his breast, and called upon her with the most passionate and moving exclamations.

But when the faint bloom re-tinged her cheek, and her lips stirred, he printed a long kiss on that cheek, on those lips, and surrendered his post to Ellinor, who, blushingly gathering the robe over the beautiful breast from which it had been slightly drawn, now entreated all, save the women of the house, to withdraw till her sister was restored.

Lester, eager to hear what his guest could relate, therefore took Aram to his own apartment, where the particulars were briefly told.

Suspecting — which indeed was the chief reason that excused him to himself in yielding to Madeline's request — that the men Lester and himself had encountered in their evening walk might be other than they seemed, and that they might have well overheard Lester's communication as to the sum in his house and the place where it was stored, he had not undressed himself, but kept the door of his room open, to listen if anything stirred. The keen sense of hearing, which we have before remarked him to possess, enabled him to catch the sound of the file at the bars even before Ellinor, notwithstanding the distance of his own chamber from the place; and seizing the sword which had been left in his room (the pistol was his own), he had descended to the room below.

"What!" said Lester, "and without a light?"

"The darkness is familiar to me," said Aram. "I could walk by the edge of a precipice in the darkest night without one false step, if I had but once passed it before. I did not gain the room, however, till the window had been forced; and by the light of a dark lantern which one of them held, I perceived two men standing by the bureau. The rest you can imagine. My victory was easy, for the bludgeon which one of them aimed at me, gave way at once to the edge of your good sword, and my pistol delivered me of the other. There ends the history."

Lester overwhelmed him with thanks and praises; but Aram, glad to escape them, hurried away to see after Madeline, whom he now met on the landing-place, leaning on Ellinor's arm, and still pale.

She gave him her hand, which he for one moment pressed passionately to his lips, but dropped the next, with an altered and chilled air. And hastily observing that he would not now detain her from a rest which she must so much require, he turned away and descended the stairs. Some of the servants were grouped around the place of encounter; he entered the room, and again started at the sight of the blood.

"Bring water!" said he, fiercely. "Will you let the stagnant gore ooze and rot into the boards, to startle the eye and still the heart with its filthy and unutterable stain? Water, I say, water!"

They hurried to obey him; and Lester, coming into the room to see the window reclosed by the help of boards, etc., found the student bending over the servants as they performed their reluctant task, and rating them with a raised and harsh voice for the hastiness with which he accused them of seeking to slur it over.

CHAPTER VI.

ARAM ALONE AMONG THE MOUNTAINS.—HIS SOLILOQUY AND PROJECT.—SCENE BETWEEN HIMSELF AND MADELINE.

> LUCE non grata fruor;
> Trepidante semper corde, *non* mortis metu,
> *Sed*[1]—
>
> SENECA: *Octavia*, act i.

THE two menservants of the house remained up the rest of the night; but it was not till the morning had advanced far beyond the usual time of rising, in the fresh shades of Grassdale, that Madeline and Ellinor became visible. Even Lester left his bed an hour later than his wont, and knocking at Aram's door, found the student already abroad, while it was evident that his bed had not been pressed during the whole of the night. Lester descended into the garden, and was there met by Peter Dealtry and a detachment of the band, who, as common-sense and Lester had predicted, were indeed at a very early period of the watch driven to their respective homes. They were now seriously concerned for their unmanliness, which they passed off as well as they could upon their conviction "that nobody at Grassdale could ever really be robbed," and promised, with sincere contrition, that they would be most excellent guards for the future. Peter was, in sooth, singularly chapfallen, and could only defend himself by an incoherent mutter; from which the squire turned somewhat impatiently when he heard, louder than the rest, the words, "seventy-seventh psalm, seventeenth verse,—

> "'The clouds, that were both thick and black,
> Did rain full plenteously.'"

Leaving the squire to the edification of the pious host, let us follow the steps of Aram, who at the early dawn had

[1] "I live a life of wretchedness; my heart perpetually trembling, *not* through fear of death, *but*—"

quitted his sleepless chamber, and though the clouds at that time still poured down in a dull and heavy sleet, wandered away, whither he neither knew nor heeded. He was now hurrying, with unabated speed, though with no purposed bourn or object, over the chain of mountains that backed the green and lovely valleys among which his home was cast.

"Yes!" said he, at last halting abruptly, with a desperate resolution stamped on his countenance, "yes! I will so determine. If after this interview I feel that I cannot command and bind Houseman's perpetual secrecy, I will surrender Madeline at once. She has loved me generously and trustingly: I will not link her life with one that may be called hence in any hour, and to so dread an account. Neither shall the gray hairs of Lester be brought, with the sorrow of my shame, to a dishonored and untimely grave. And after the outrage of last night,—the daring outrage,—how can I calculate on the safety of a day? Though Houseman was not present, though I can scarce believe he *knew*, or at least abetted, the attack, yet they were assuredly of his gang; had one been seized, the clew might have traced to his detection. Were *he* detected, what should I have to dread? No, Madeline, no; not while this sword hangs over me will I subject *thee* to share the horror of my fate!"

This resolution, which was certainly generous, and yet no more than honest, Aram had no sooner arrived at than he dismissed at once, by one of those efforts which powerful minds can command, all the weak and vacillating thoughts that might interfere with the sternness of his determination. He seemed to breathe more freely, and the haggard wanness of his brow relaxed at least from the workings that, but the moment before, distorted its wonted serenity with a maniac wildness.

He now pursued his desultory way with a calmer step.

"What a night!" said he, again breaking into the low murmur in which he was accustomed to hold commune with himself. "Had Houseman been one of the ruffians, a shot might have freed me, and without a crime, forever; and till the light flashed on their brows, I thought the smaller man bore his aspect. Ha! out, tempting thought, out on thee!" he cried

aloud, and stamping with his foot; then, recalled by his own vehemence, he cast a jealous and hurried glance around him, though at that moment his step was on the very height of the mountains, where not even the solitary shepherd, save in search of some more daring straggler of the flock, ever brushed the dew from the cragged yet fragrant soil. "Yet," he said, in a lower voice, and again sinking into the sombre depths of his revery, "it *is* a tempting, a wondrously tempting thought. And it struck athwart me like a flash of lightning when this hand was at his throat,—a tighter strain, another moment, and Eugene Aram had not an enemy, a witness against him, left in the world. Ha! are the dead no foes then,—are the dead no witnesses?" Here he relapsed into utter silence; but his gestures continued wild, and his eyes wandered round with a bloodshot and unquiet glare. "Enough," at length he said calmly, and with the manner of one "who has rolled a stone from his heart,"[1] "enough! I will not so sully myself, unless all other hope of self-preservation be extinct. And why despond? The plan I have thought of seems well-laid, wise, consummate at all points. Let me consider: forfeited the moment he re-enters England; not given till he has left it; paid periodically; and of such extent as to supply his wants, preserve him from crime, and forbid the possibility of extorting more. All this sounds well; and if not feasible at last, why farewell Madeline, and I myself leave this land forever. Come what will to me,—death in its vilest shape,—let not the stroke fall on that breast. And if it be," he continued, his face lighting up, "if it be, as it may yet, that I can chain this hell-hound, why, even then, the instant that Madeline is mine I will fly these scenes; I will seek a yet obscurer and remoter corner of earth; I will choose another name— Fool! why did I not so before? But matters it? What is writ is writ. Who can struggle with the invisible and giant Hand that launched the world itself into motion, and at whose pre-decree we hold the dark boons of life and death?"

It was not till evening that Aram, utterly worn out and ex

[1] Eastern saying.

hausted, found himself in the neighborhood of Lester's house. The sun had only broken forth at its setting, and it now glittered, from its western pyre, over the dripping hedges, and flung a brief but magic glow along the rich landscape around, — the changing woods clad in the thousand dyes of autumn; the scattered and peaceful cottages, with their long wreaths of smoke curling upward, and the gray and venerable walls of the manor-house, with the church hard by, and the delicate spire, which, mixing itself with heaven, is at once the most touching and solemn emblem of the faith to which it is devoted. It was a Sabbath eve; and from the spot on which Aram stood he might discern many a rustic train trooping slowly up the green village lane towards the church, and the deep bell which summoned to the last service of the day now swung its voice far over the sunlit and tranquil scene.

But it was not the setting sun, nor the autumnal landscape, nor the voice of the holy bell, that now arrested the step of Aram. At a little distance before him, leaning over a gate, and seemingly waiting till the ceasing of the bell should announce the time to enter the sacred mansion, he beheld the figure of Madeline Lester. Her head at the moment was averted from him, as if she were looking after Ellinor and her father, who were in the church-yard among a little group of their homely neighbors; and he was half in doubt whether to shun her presence, when she suddenly turned round, and, seeing him, uttered an exclamation of joy. It was now too late for avoidance; and calling to his aid that mastery over his features which in ordinary times few more eminently possessed, he approached his beautiful mistress with a smile as serene, if not as glowing, as her own. But she had already opened the gate, and bounding forward, met him half way.

"Ah, truant, truant," said she, — "the whole day absent, without inquiry or farewell! After this, when shall I believe that thou really lovest me? But," continued Madeline, gazing on his countenance, which bore witness, in its present languor, to the fierce emotions which had lately raged within, "but, heavens, dearest, how pale you look! You are fatigued;

give me your hand, Eugene,—it is parched and dry. Come into the house; you must need rest and refreshment."

"I am better here, my Madeline,—the air and the sun revive me. Let us rest by the stile yonder. But you were going to church, and the bell has ceased."

"I could attend, I fear, little to the prayers now," said Madeline, "unless you feel well enough, and will come to church with me."

"To church!" said Aram, with a half shudder. "No; my thoughts are in no mood for prayer."

"Then you shall give your thoughts to me, and I, in return, will pray for you before I rest."

And so saying, Madeline, with her usual innocent frankness of manner, wound her arm in his, and they walked onwards towards the stile Aram had pointed out. It was a little rustic stile, with chestnut-trees hanging over it on either side. It stands to this day, and I have pleased myself with finding Walter Lester's initials, and Madeline's also, with the date of the year, carved in half-worn letters on the wood, probably by the hand of the former.

They now rested at this spot. All around them was still and solitary; the groups of peasants had entered the church, and nothing of life, save the cattle grazing in the distant fields, or the thrush starting from the wet bushes, was visible. The winds were lulled to rest, and though somewhat of the chill of autumn floated on the air, it only bore a balm to the harassed brow and fevered veins of the student; and Madeline,—*she* felt nothing but his presence. It was exactly what we picture to ourselves of a Sabbath eve,—unutterably serene and soft, and borrowing from the very melancholy of the declining year an impressive yet a mild solemnity.

There are seasons, often in the most dark or turbulent periods of our life, when—why, we know not—we are suddenly called from ourselves by the remembrances of early childhood: something touches the electric chain, and, lo! a host of shadowy and sweet recollections steal upon us. The wheel rests, the oar is suspended, we are snatched from the labor and travail of present life; we are born again, and live anew. As

the secret page in which the characters once written seem forever effaced, but which, if breathed upon, gives them again into view, so the memory can revive the images invisible for years; but while we gaze, the breath recedes from the surface, and all, one moment so vivid, with the next moment has become once more a blank.

"It is singular," said Aram, "but often as I have paused at this spot and gazed upon this landscape, a likeness to the scenes of my childish life, which it now seems to me to present, never occurred to me before. Yes, yonder in that cottage with the sycamores in front and the orchard extending behind till its boundary, as we now stand, seems lost among the woodland, I could fancy that I looked upon my father's home. The clump of trees that lies yonder to the right could cheat me readily to the belief that I saw the little grove in which, enamoured with the first passion of study, I was wont to pore over the thrice-read book through the long summer days,—a boy, a thoughtful boy, yet, oh, how happy! What worlds appeared then to me to open in every page; how exhaustless I thought the treasures and the hopes of life; and beautiful on the mountain-tops seemed to me the steps of Knowledge! I did not dream of all that the musing and lonely passion that I nursed was to entail upon me. There, in the clefts of the valley, on the ridges of the hill, or by the fragrant course of the stream, I began already to win its history from the herb or flower; I saw nothing that I did not long to unravel its secrets; all that the earth nourished ministered to one desire: and what of low or sordid did there mingle with that desire? The petty avarice, the mean ambition, the debasing love, even the heat, the anger, the fickleness, the caprice of other men, did they allure or bow down my nature from its steep and solitary eyry? I lived but to feed my mind; wisdom was my thirst, my dream, my aliment, my sole fount and sustenance of life. And have I not sown the wind and reaped the whirlwind? The glory of my youth is gone, my veins are chilled, my frame is bowed, my heart is gnawed with cares, my nerves are unstrung as a loosened bow: and what, after all, is my gain? O God! what is my gain?"

"Eugene, dear, dear Eugene!" murmured Madeline, soothingly, and wrestling with her tears, "is not your gain great? Is it not triumph that you stand, while yet young, almost alone in the world for success in all that you have attempted?"

"And what," exclaimed Aram, breaking in upon her, "what is this world which we ransack but a stupendous charnel-house? Everything that we deem most lovely, ask its origin? Decay! When we rifle Nature and collect wisdom, are we not like the hags of old, culling simples from the rank grave, and extracting sorceries from the rotting bones of the dead? Everything around us is fathered by corruption, battened by corruption, and into corruption returns at last. Corruption is at once the womb and grave of Nature; and the very beauty on which we gaze,—the cloud and the tree and the swarming waters,—all are one vast panorama of death! But it did not always seem to me thus; and even now I speak with a heated pulse and a dizzy brain. Come, Madeline, let us change the theme."

And dismissing at once from his language, and perhaps, as he proceeded, also from his mind, all of its former gloom, except such as might shade, but not embitter, the natural tenderness of remembrance, Aram now related — with that vividness of diction which, though we feel we can very inadequately convey its effect, characterized his conversation, and gave something of poetic interest to all he uttered — those reminiscences which belong to childhood, and which all of us take delight to hear from the lips of one we love.

It was while on this theme that the lights which the deepening twilight had now made necessary became visible in the church, streaming afar through its large oriel window, and brightening the dark firs that overshadowed the graves around; and just at that moment the organ (a gift from a rich rector, and the boast of the neighboring country) stole upon the silence with its swelling and solemn note. There was something in the strain of this sudden music that was so kindred with the holy repose of the scene, chimed so exactly to the chord now vibrating in Aram's mind, that it struck upon him at once with an irresistible power. He paused abruptly, "as

if an angel spoke!" That sound, so peculiarly adapted to express sacred and unearthly emotion, none who have ever mourned or sinned can hear, at an unlooked-for moment, without a certain sentiment that either subdues or elevates or awes. But he — he was a boy once more; he was again in the village church of his native place; his father, with his silver hair, stood again beside him; there was his mother, pointing to him the holy verse; there the half-arch, half-reverent face of his little sister (she died young!); there the upward eye and hushed countenance of the preacher who had first raised his mind to knowledge and supplied its food, — all, all lived, moved, breathed, again before him, all, as when he was young and guiltless and at peace, hope and the future one word!

He bowed his head lower and lower; the hardness and hypocrisies of pride, the sense of danger and of horror that, in agitating, still supported the mind of this resolute and scheming man, at once forsook him. Madeline felt his tears drop fast and burning on her hand; and the next moment, overcome by the relief it afforded to a heart preyed upon by fiery and dread secrets which it could not reveal, and a frame exhausted by the long and extreme tension of all its powers, he laid his head upon that faithful bosom and wept aloud.

CHAPTER VII.

ARAM'S SECRET EXPEDITION.—A SCENE WORTHY THE ACTORS.—ARAM'S ADDRESS AND POWERS OF PERSUASION OR HYPOCRISY.—THEIR RESULT.—A FEARFUL NIGHT.—ARAM'S SOLITARY RIDE HOMEWARD.—WHOM HE MEETS BY THE VAY, AND WHAT HE SEES.

Macbeth. Now o'er the one half-world
Nature seems dead.

. . . . . .

Donalbain. Our separated fortune
Shall keep us both the safer.

. . . . . .

Old Man. Hours dreadful and things strange.—*Macbeth.*

"And you must really go to —— to pay your importunate creditor this very evening? Sunday is a bad day for such matters; but as you pay him by an order, it does not much signify, and I can well understand your impatience to feel relieved from the debt. But it is already late; and if it must be so, you had better start."

"True," said Aram to the above remark of Lester's, as the two stood together without the door; "but do you feel quite secure and guarded against any renewed attack?"

"Why, unless they bring a regiment, yes! I have put a body of our patrol on a service where they can scarce be inefficient,—that is, I have stationed them in the house instead of without; and I shall myself bear them company through the greater part of the night. To-morrow I shall remove all that I possess of value to —— [the county town], including those unlucky guineas which you will not ease me of."

"The order you have kindly given me will amply satisfy my purpose," answered Aram. "And so there has been no clew to these robberies discovered throughout the day?"

"None. To-morrow the magistrates are to meet at —— and concert measures; it is absolutely impossible but that we should detect the villains in a few days,— that is, if they remain in these parts. I hope to Heaven you will not meet them this evening."

"I shall go well armed," answered Aram, "and the horse you lend me is fleet and strong. And now farewell for the present. I shall probably not return to Grassdale this night, or if I do, it will be at so late an hour that I shall seek my own domicile without disturbing you."

"No, no; you had better remain in the town, and not return till morning," said the squire. "And now let us come to the stables."

To obviate all chance of suspicion as to the real place of his destination, Aram deliberately rode to the town he had mentioned as the one in which his pretended creditor expected him. He put up at an inn, walked forth as if to meet some one in the town, returned, remounted, and by a circuitous route came into the neighborhood of the place in which he was to meet Houseman; then turning into a long and dense chain of wood, he fastened his horse to a tree, and looking to the priming of his pistols, which he carried under his riding-cloak, proceeded to the spot on foot.

The night was still, and not wholly dark; for the clouds lay scattered, though dense, and suffered many stars to gleam through the heavy air. The moon herself was abroad, but on her decline, and looked forth with a wan and saddened aspect as she travelled from cloud to cloud. It has been the necessary course of our narrative to portray Aram more often in his weaker moments than, to give an exact notion of his character, we could have altogether wished; but whenever he stood in the presence of danger, his whole soul was in arms to cope with it worthily,—courage, sagacity, even cunning, all awakened to the encounter; and the mind which his life had so austerely cultivated repaid him in the urgent season with its acute address and unswerving hardihood. The Devil's Crag, as it was popularly called, was a spot consecrated by many a wild tradition, which would not, perhaps, be wholly out of

character with the dark thread of this tale, did the rapidity of our narrative allow us to relate them.

The same stream which lent so soft an attraction to the valleys of Grassdale here assumed a different character; broad, black, and rushing, it whirled along a course overhung by shagged and abrupt banks. On the opposite side to that by which Aram now pursued his path, an almost perpendicular mountain was covered with gigantic pine and fir that might have reminded a German wanderer of the darkest recesses of the Hartz, and seemed, indeed, no unworthy haunt for the weird huntsman or the forest fiend. Over this wood the moon now shimmered with the pale and feeble light we have already described, and only threw into a more sombre shade the motionless and gloomy foliage. Of all the offspring of the forest, the fir bears, perhaps, the most saddening and desolate aspect. Its long branches, without absolute leaf or blossom; its dead, dark, eternal hue, which the winter seems to wither not, nor the spring to revive,—have I know not what of a mystic and unnatural life. Around all woodland there is that *horror umbrarum*[1] which becomes more solemn and awful amidst the silence and depth of night; but this is yet more especially the characteristic of that sullen evergreen. Perhaps, too, this effect is increased by the sterile and dreary soil on which, when in groves, it is generally found; and its very hardiness, the very pertinacity with which it draws its strange, unfluctuating life from the sternest wastes and most reluctant strata, enhance, unconsciously, the unwelcome effect it is calculated to create upon the mind. At this place, too, the waters that dashed beneath gave yet additional wildness to the rank verdure of the wood, and contributed, by their rushing darkness partially broken by the stars, and the hoarse roar of their chafed course, a yet more grim and savage sublimity to the scene.

Winding a narrow path (for the whole country was as familiar as a garden to his footstep) that led through the tall wet herbage, almost along the perilous brink of the stream, Aram was now aware, by the increased and deafening sound

[1] Shadowy horror.

of the waters, that the appointed spot was nearly gained; and presently the glimmering and imperfect light of the skies revealed the dim shape of a gigantic rock that rose abruptly from the middle of the stream, and which, rude, barren, vast, as it really was, seemed now, by the uncertainty of night, like some monstrous and deformed creature of the waters suddenly emerging from their vexed and dreary depths. This was the far-famed crag, which had borrowed from tradition its evil and ominous name. And now the stream, bending round with a broad and sudden swoop, showed at a little distance, ghostly and indistinct through the darkness, the mighty waterfall whose roar had been his guide. Only in one streak adown the giant cataract the stars were reflected; and this long train of broken light glittered preternaturally forth through the rugged crags and sombre verdure that wrapped either side of the waterfall in utter and rayless gloom.

Nothing could exceed the forlorn and terrific grandeur of the spot; the roar of the waters supplied to the ear what the night forbade to the eye. Incessant and eternal, they thundered down into the gulf; and then shooting over that fearful basin, and forming another, but a mimic fall, dashed on till they were opposed by the sullen and abrupt crag below; and besieging its base with a renewed roar, sent their foaming and angry spray half way up the hoar ascent.

At this stern and dreary spot, well suited for such conferences as Aram and Houseman alone could hold, and which, whatever was the original secret that linked the two men thus strangely, seemed of necessity to partake of a desperate and lawless character, with danger for its main topic and death itself for its coloring, Aram now paused, and with an eye accustomed to the darkness looked around for his companion.

He did not wait long; from the profound shadow that girded the space immediately around the fall, Houseman emerged and joined the student. The stunning noise of the cataract in the place where they met, forbade any attempt to converse; and they walked on by the course of the stream, to gain a spot less in reach of the deafening shout of the moun-

tain giant as he rushed with his banded waters upon the valley like a foe.

It was noticeable that as they proceeded, Aram walked on with an unsuspicious and careless demeanor; but Houseman, pointing out the way with his hand, not leading it, kept a little behind Aram, and watched his motions with a vigilant and wary eye. The student, who had diverged from the path at Houseman's direction, now paused at a place where the matted bushes seemed to forbid any farther progress, and said, for the first time breaking the silence, "We cannot proceed: shall this be the place of our conference?"

"No," said Houseman; "we had better pierce the bushes. I know the way, but will not lead it."

"And wherefore?"

"The mark of your gripe is still on my throat," replied Houseman, significantly; "you know as well as I that it is not always safe to have a friend lagging behind."

"Let us rest here, then," said Aram, calmly, the darkness veiling any alteration of his countenance which his comrade's suspicion might have created.

"Yet it were much better," said Houseman, doubtingly, "could we gain the cave below."

"The cave!" said Aram, starting, as if the word had a sound of fear.

"Ay, ay; but not Saint Robert's," said Houseman; and the grin of his teeth was visible through the dulness of the shade. "But come, give me your hand, and I will venture to conduct you through the thicket. That is your left hand," observed Houseman, with a sharp and angry suspicion in his tone; "give me the right."

"As you will," said Aram, in a subdued, yet meaning voice that seemed to come from his heart, and thrilled, for an instant, to the bones of him who heard it,—"as you will; but for fourteen years I have not given this right hand, in pledge of fellowship, to living man: you alone deserve the courtesy, —there!"

Houseman hesitated before he took the hand now extended to him.

"Pshaw!" said he, as if indignant at himself; "what scruples at a shadow! Come," grasping the hand, "that 's well,—so, so; now we are in the thicket. Tread firm; this way. Hold!" continued Houseman, under his breath, as suspicion anew seemed to cross him, "hold! we can see each other's face not even dimly now; but in this hand—*my* right is free—I have a knife that has done good service ere this; and if I do but suspect that you are about to play me false, I bury it in your heart. Do you heed me?"

"Fool!" said Aram, scornfully; "I should dread you dead yet more than living."

Houseman made no answer, but continued to grope on through the path in the thicket, which he evidently knew well; though even in daylight, so thick were the trees, and so artfully had their boughs been left to cover the track, no path could have been discovered by one unacquainted with the clew.

They had now walked on for some minutes, and of late their steps had been threading a rugged and somewhat precipitous descent; all this while the pulse of the hand Houseman held, beat with as steadfast and calm a throb as in the most quiet mood of learned meditation, although Aram could not but be conscious that a mere accident, a slip of the foot, an entanglement in the briers, might awaken the irritable fears of his ruffian comrade and bring the knife to his breast. But this was not that form of death that could shake the nerves of Aram; nor, though arming his soul to ward off one danger, was he well sensible of another that might have seemed equally near and probable to a less collected and energetic nature. Houseman now halted, again put aside the boughs, proceeded a few steps, and by a certain dampness and oppression in the air Aram rightly conjectured himself in the cavern Houseman had spoken of. "We are landed now," said Houseman. "But wait! I will strike a light. I do not love darkness, even with another sort of companion than the one I have now the honor to entertain."

In a few moments a light was produced, and placed aloft on a crag in the cavern; but the ray it gave was feeble and dull,

and left all, beyond the immediate spot in which they stood, in a darkness little less Cimmerian than before.

"'Fore Gad, it is cold," said Houseman, shivering; "but I have taken care, you see, to provide for a friend's comfort." So saying, he approached a bundle of dry sticks and leaves piled at one corner of the cave, applied the light to the fuel, and presently the fire rose crackling, breaking into a thousand sparks, and freeing itself gradually from the clouds of smoke in which it was enveloped. It now mounted into a ruddy and cheering flame, and the warm glow played picturesquely upon the gray sides of the cavern, which was of a rugged shape and small dimensions, and cast its reddening light over the forms of the two men.

Houseman stood close to the flame, spreading his hands over it, and a sort of grim complacency stealing along features singularly ill-favored, and sinister in their expression, as he felt the animal luxury of the warmth.

Across his middle was a broad leathern belt containing a brace of large horse-pistols and the knife, or rather dagger, with which he had menaced Aram,—an instrument sharpened on both sides and nearly a foot in length. Altogether, what with his muscular breadth of figure, his hard and rugged features, his weapons, and a certain reckless, bravo air which indescribably marked his attitude and bearing, it was not well possible to imagine a fitter habitant for that grim cave, or one from whom men of peace, like Eugene Aram, might have seemed to derive more reasonable cause of alarm.

The scholar stood at a little distance, waiting till his companion was entirely prepared for the conference, and his pale and lofty features, hushed in their usual deep, but at such a moment almost preternatural, repose. He stood leaning with folded arms against the rude wall, the light reflected upon his dark garments, with the graceful riding-cloak of the day half falling from his shoulder, and revealing also the pistols in his belt, and the sword which, though commonly worn at that time by all pretending to superiority above the lower and trading orders, Aram usually waived as a distinction, but now carried as a defence. And nothing could be more strik-

ing than the contrast between the ruffian form of his companion and the delicate and chiselled beauty of the student's features, with their air of mournful intelligence and serene command, and the slender though nervous symmetry of his frame.

"Houseman," said Aram, now advancing, as his comrade turned his face from the flame towards him, "before we enter on the main subject of our proposed commune, tell me, were you engaged in the attempt last night upon Lester's house?"

"By the fiend, no!" answered Houseman; "nor did I learn it till this morning: it was unpremeditated till within a few hours of the time, by the two fools who alone planned it. The fact is that I myself and the greater part of our little band were engaged some miles off, in the western part of the county. Two — our general spies — had been, of their own accord, into your neighborhood to reconnoitre. They marked Lester's house during the day, and gathered from unsuspected inquiry in the village — for they were dressed as mere country clowns — several particulars which induced them to think the house contained what might repay the trouble of breaking into it; and walking along the fields, they overheard the good master of the house tell one of his neighbors of a large sum at home, — nay, even describe the place where it was kept. That determined them; they feared that the sum might be removed the next day. They had noted the house sufficiently to profit by the description given; they determined, then, of themselves, for it was too late to reckon on our assistance, to break into the room in which the money was kept, — though from the aroused vigilance of the frightened hamlet and the force within the house, they resolved to attempt no further booty. They reckoned on the violence of the storm and the darkness of the night to prevent their being heard or seen. They were mistaken: the house was alarmed, they were no sooner in the luckless room than —"

"Well, I know the rest. Was the one wounded dangerously hurt?"

"Oh, he will recover, he will recover; our men are no chickens. But I own I thought it natural that you might

suspect me of sharing in the attack; and though, as I have said before, I do not love you, I have no wish to embroil matters so far as an outrage on the house of your father-in-law might be reasonably expected to do,—at all events while the gate to an amicable compromise between us is still open."

"I am satisfied on this head," said Aram, "and I can now treat with you in a spirit of less distrustful precaution than before. I tell you, Houseman, that the terms are no longer at your control; you must leave this part of the country, and that forthwith, or you inevitably perish. The whole population is alarmed, and the most vigilant of the London police have been already sent for. Life is sweet to you, as to us all, and I cannot imagine you so mad as to incur, not the risk, but the certainty, of losing it. You can no longer, therefore, hold the threat of your presence over my head. Besides, were you able to do so, I at least have the power, which you seem to have forgotten, of freeing myself from it. Am I chained to yonder valleys? Have I not the facility of quitting them at any moment I will,—of seeking a hiding-place which might baffle, not only your vigilance to discover me, but that of the law? True, my approaching marriage puts some clog upon my wing; but you know that I, of all men, am not likely to be the slave of passion. And what ties are strong enough to arrest the steps of him who flies from a fearful death? Am I using sophistry here, Houseman? Have I not reason on my side?"

"What you say is true enough," said Houseman, reluctantly, "I do not gainsay it. But I know you have not sought me, in this spot and at this hour, for the purpose of denying my claims; the desire of compromise alone can have brought you hither."

"You speak well," said Aram, preserving the admirable coolness of his manner, and continuing the deep and sagacious hypocrisy by which he sought to baffle the dogged covetousness and keen sense of interest with which he had to contend. "It is not easy for either of us to deceive the other. We are men whose perception a life of danger has sharpened upon all

points; I speak to you frankly, for disguise is unavailing. Though I can fly from your reach, though I can desert my present home and my intended bride, I would fain think I have free and secure choice to preserve that exact path and scene of life which I have chalked out for myself; I would fain be rid of all apprehension from you. There are two ways only by which this security can be won: the first is through your death,—nay, start not, nor put your hand on your pistol; you have not now cause to fear me. Had I chosen that method of escape, I could have effected it long since. When, months ago, you slept under my roof,—ay, *slept*,—what should have hindered me from stabbing you during the slumber? Two nights since, when my blood was up and the fury upon me, what should have prevented me tightening the grasp that you so resent, and laying you breathless at my feet? Nay, now, though you keep your eye fixed on my motions and your hand upon your weapon, you would be no match for a desperate and resolved man who might as well perish in conflict with you as by the protracted accomplishment of your threats. Your ball *might* fail,—even now I see your hand trembles; mine, *if* I so will it, is certain death. No, Houseman, it would be as vain for your eye to scan the dark pool into whose breast yon cataract casts its waters as for your intellect to pierce the depths of my mind and motives. Your murder, though in self-defence, would lay a weight upon my soul which would sink it forever; I should see in your death new chances of detection spread themselves before me. The terrors of the dead are not to be bought or awed into silence: I should pass from one peril into another; and the law's dread vengeance might fall upon me, through the last peril, even yet more surely than through the first. Be composed on this point. From my hand, unless you urge it madly upon yourself, you are wholly safe. Let us turn to my second method of attaining security. It lies, not in your momentary cessation from persecutions, not in your absence from this spot alone,—you must quit the country; you must never return to it; your home must be cast, and your very grave dug, in a foreign soil. Are you prepared for this? If

not, I can say no more, and I again cast myself passive into the arms of Fate."

"You ask," said Houseman, whose fears were allayed by Aram's address, though at the same time his dissolute and desperate nature was subdued and tamed, in spite of himself, by the very composure of the loftier mind with which it was brought in contact, "you ask," said he, "no trifling favor of a man,—to desert his country forever. But I am no dreamer, that I should love one spot better than another. I might, perhaps, prefer a foreign clime, as the safer and the freer from old recollections, if I could live in it as a man who loves the relish of life should do. Show me the advantages I am to gain by exile, and farewell to the pale cliffs of England forever!"

"Your demand is just," answered Aram. "Listen, then. I am willing to coin all my poor wealth, save alone the barest pittance wherewith to sustain life,—nay, more, I am prepared also to melt down the whole of my possible expectations from others, into the form of an annuity to yourself. But mark, it will be taken out of my hands, so that you can have no power over me to alter the conditions with which it will be saddled. It will be so vested that it shall commence the moment you touch a foreign clime, and wholly and forever cease the moment you set foot on any part of English ground, or—mark also—at the moment of my death. I shall then know that no further hope from me can induce you to risk this income; for as I shall have spent my all in attaining it, you cannot even meditate the design of extorting more. I shall know that you will not menace my life, for my death would be the destruction of your fortunes. We shall live thus separate and secure from each other: you will have only cause to hope for my safety; and I shall have no reason to shudder at your pursuits. It is true that one source of fear might exist for me still,—namely, that in dying you should enjoy the fruitless vengeance of criminating me; but this chance I must patiently endure. You, if older, are more robust and hardy than myself,—your life will probably be longer than mine; and even were it otherwise, why should we destroy one another? I

will solemnly swear to respect your secret at my death-bed; why not on your part, I say not swear, but resolve to respect mine? We cannot love one another; but why hate with a gratuitous and demon vengeance? No, Houseman, however circumstances may have darkened or steeled your heart, it is touched with humanity yet: you will owe to me the bread of a secure and easy existence; you will feel that I have stripped myself, even to penury, to purchase the comforts I cheerfully resign to you; you will remember that, instead of the sacrifices enjoined by this alternative, I might have sought only to counteract your threats by attempting a life that you strove to make a snare and torture to my own. You will remember this, and you will not grudge me the austere and gloomy solitude in which I seek to forget, or the one solace with which I, perhaps vainly, endeavor to cheer my passage to a quiet grave. No, Houseman, no; dislike, hate, menace me as you will, I still feel I shall have no cause to dread the mere wantonness of your revenge."

These words, aided by a tone of voice and an expression of countenance that gave them perhaps their chief effect, took even the hardened nature of Houseman by surprise; he was affected by an emotion which he could not have believed it possible the man who till then had galled him by the humbling sense of inferiority could have created. He extended his hand to Aram.

"By ——," he exclaimed, with an oath which we spare the reader, "you are right! You have made me as helpless in your hands as an infant. I accept your offer,—if I were to refuse it, I should be driven to the same courses I now pursue. But look you; I know not what may be the amount of the annuity you can raise. I shall not, however, require more than will satisfy my wants, which, if not so scanty as your own, are not at least very extravagant or very refined. As for the rest, if there be any surplus, in God's name keep it for yourself, and rest assured that, so far as I am concerned, you shall be molested no more."

"No, Houseman," said Aram, with a half smile, "you shall have all I first mentioned; that is, all beyond what nature

craves, honorably and fully. Man's best resolutions are weak; if you knew I possessed aught to spare, a fancied want, a momentary extravagance, might tempt you to demand it. Let us put ourselves beyond the possible reach of temptation. But do not flatter yourself by the hope that the income will be magnificent. My own annuity is but trifling, and the half of the dowry I expect from my future father-in-law is all that I can at present obtain. The whole of that dowry is insignificant as a sum. But if this does not suffice for you, I must beg or borrow elsewhere."

"This, after all, is a pleasanter way of settling business," said Houseman, "than by threats and anger. And now I will tell you exactly the sum on which, if I could receive it yearly, I could live without looking beyond the pale of the law for more,—on which I could cheerfully renounce England and commence 'the honest man.' But then, hark you, I must have half settled on my little daughter."

"What! have you a child?" said Aram, eagerly, and well pleased to find an additional security for his own safety.

"Ay, a little girl,—my only one,—in her eighth year. She lives with her grandmother, for she is motherless; and that girl must not be left quite destitute should I be summoned hence before my time. Some twelve years hence—as poor Jane promises to be pretty—she may be married off my hands; but her childhood must not be exposed to the chances of beggary or shame."

"Doubtless not, doubtless not. Who shall say now that we ever outlive feeling?" said Aram. "Half the annuity shall be settled upon her, should she survive you; but on the same condition, ceasing when I die, or the instant of your return to England. And now, name the sum that you deem sufficing."

"Why," said Houseman, counting on his fingers and muttering, "twenty—fifty—wine and the creature cheap abroad; humph! a hundred for living, and half as much for pleasure. Come, Aram, one hundred and fifty guineas per annum, English money, will do for a foreign life,—you see I am easily satisfied."

"Be it so," said Aram; "I will engage, by one means or

another, to obtain what you ask. For this purpose I shall set out for London to-morrow; I will not lose a moment in seeing the necessary settlement made as we have specified. But, meanwhile, you must engage to leave this neighborhood, and, if possible, cause your comrades to do the same; although you will not hesitate, for the sake of your own safety, immediately to separate from them."

"Now that we are on good terms," replied Houseman, "I will not scruple to oblige you in these particulars. My comrades *intend* to quit the country before to-morrow,—nay, half are already gone; by daybreak I myself will be some miles hence, and separated from each of them. Let us meet in London after the business is completed, and there conclude our last interview on earth."

"What will be your address?"

"In Lambeth there is a narrow alley that leads to the waterside, called Peveril Lane. The last house to the right, towards the river, is my usual lodging,—a safe resting-place at all times and for all men."

"There then will I seek you. And now, Houseman, fare you well! As you remember your word to me, may life flow smooth for your child."

"Eugene Aram," said Houseman, "there is about you something against which the fiercer devil within me would rise in vain. I have read that the tiger can be awed by the human eye, and you compel me into submission by a spell equally unaccountable. You are a singular man, and it seems to me a riddle how we could ever have been thus connected, or how —But we will not rip up the past; it is an ugly sight, and the fire is just out. Those stories do not do for the dark. But to return. Were it only for the sake of my child, you might depend upon me now. Better, too, an arrangement of this sort than if I had a larger sum in hand, which I might be tempted to fling away, and, in looking for more, run my neck into a halter and leave poor Jane upon charity. But come, it is almost dark again, and no doubt you wish to be stirring. Stay, I will lead you back, and put you on the right track, lest you stumble on my friends."

"Is this cavern one of their haunts?" said Aram.

"Sometimes; but they sleep the other side of the Devil's Crag to-night. Nothing like a change of quarters for longevity, eh?"

"And they easily spare you?"

"Yes, if it be only on rare occasions and on the plea of *family* business. Now then your hand, as before. 'S death! how it rains! — lightning too! I could look with less fear on a naked sword than those red, forked, blinding flashes. Hark! thunder!"

The night had now, indeed, suddenly changed its aspect; the rain descended in torrents, even more impetuously than on the former night, while the thunder burst over their very heads as they wound upward through the brake. With every instant the lightning, darting through the riven chasm of the blackness that seemed suspended as in a solid substance above, brightened the whole heaven into one livid and terrific flame, and showed to the two men the faces of each other, rendered deathlike and ghastly by the glare. Houseman was evidently affected by the fear that sometimes seizes even the sturdiest criminals when exposed to those more fearful phenomena of the heavens, which seem to humble into nothing the power and the wrath of man. His teeth chattered, and he muttered broken words about the peril of wandering near trees when the lightning was of that forked character, quickening his pace at every sentence, and sometimes interrupting himself with an ejaculation, half oath, half prayer, or a congratulation that the rain at least diminished the danger. They soon cleared the thicket, and a few minutes brought them once more to the banks of the stream and the increased roar of the cataract. No earthly scene, perhaps, could surpass the appalling sublimity of that which they beheld, — every instant the lightning, which became more and more frequent, converting the black waters into billows of living fire, or wreathing itself in lurid spires around the huge crag that now rose in sight; and again, as the thunder rolled onward, darting its vain fury upon the rushing cataract and the tortured breast of the gulf that raved below. And the sounds that filled the

air were even more fraught with terror and menace than the scene,—the waving, the groans, the crash of the pines on the hill, the impetuous force of the rain upon the whirling river, and the everlasting roar of the cataract, answered anon by the yet more awful voice that burst above it from the clouds.

They halted while yet sufficiently distant from the cataract to be heard by each other. "My path," said Aram, as the lightning now paused upon the scene, and seemed literally to wrap in a lurid shroud the dark figure of the student, as he stood, with his hand calmly raised, and his cheek pale, but dauntless and composed,—"my path now lies yonder; in a week we shall meet again."

"By the fiend," said Houseman, shuddering, "I would not, for a full hundred, ride alone through the moor you will pass! There stands a gibbet by the road, on which a parricide was hanged in chains. Pray Heaven this night be no omen of the success of our present compact!"

"A steady heart, Houseman," answered Aram, striking into the separate path, "is its own omen."

The student soon gained the spot in which he had left his horse; the animal had not attempted to break the bridle, but stood trembling from limb to limb, and testified by a quick, short neigh the satisfaction with which it hailed the approach of its master, and found itself no longer alone.

Aram remounted, and hastened once more into the main road. He scarcely felt the rain, though the fierce wind drove it right against his path; he scarcely marked the lightning, though at times it seemed to dart its arrows on his very form: his heart was absorbed in the success of his schemes.

"Let the storm without howl on," thought he; "that within hath a respite at last. Amidst the winds and rains I can breathe more freely than I have done on the smoothest summer day. By the charm of a deeper mind and a subtler tongue I have conquered this desperate foe, I have silenced this inveterate spy. And, Heaven be praised, he too has human ties; and by those ties I hold him! Now, then, I hasten to London, I arrange this annuity, see that the law tightens every

cord of the compact; and when all is done, and this dangerous man fairly departed on his exile, I return to Madeline, and devote to her a life no longer the vassal of accident and the hour. But I have been taught caution. Secure as my own prudence may have made me from further apprehension of Houseman, I will yet place myself *wholly* beyond his power; I will still consummate my former purpose, adopt a new name, and seek a new retreat. Madeline may not know the real cause, but this brain is not barren of excuse. Ah!" as drawing his cloak closer round him, he felt the purse hid within his breast which contained the order he had obtained from Lester,—"ah! this will now add its quota to purchase, not a momentary relief, but the stipend of perpetual silence. I have passed through the ordeal easier than I had hoped for. Had the devil at his heart been more difficult to lay, so necessary is his absence that I must have purchased it at any cost. Courage, Eugene Aram! thy mind, for which thou hast lived, and for which thou hast hazarded thy soul,—if soul and mind be distinct from each other,—thy mind can support thee yet through every peril; not till thou art stricken into idiocy shalt thou behold thyself defenceless. How cheerfully," muttered he, after a momentary pause,—"how cheerfully, for safety, and to breathe with a quiet heart the air of Madeline's presence, shall I rid myself of all save enough to defy want! And want can never *now* come to me, as of old. He who knows the sources of every science from which wealth is wrought, holds even wealth at his will."

Breaking at every interval into these soliloquies, Aram continued to breast the storm until he had won half his journey, and had come upon a long and bleak moor, which was the entrance to that beautiful line of country in which the valleys around Grassdale are embosomed. Faster and faster came the rain; and though the thunder-clouds were now behind, they yet followed loweringly, in their black array, the path of the lonely horseman.

But now he heard the sound of hoofs making towards him. He drew his horse on one side of the road, and at that instant, a broad flash of lightning illumining the space around,

he beheld four horsemen speeding along at a rapid gallop. They were armed, and conversing loudly; their oaths were heard jarringly and distinctly amidst all the more solemn and terrific sounds of the night. They came on sweeping by the student, whose hand was on his pistol, for he recognized in one of the riders the man who had escaped unwounded from Lester's house,—he and his comrades were evidently, then, Houseman's desperate associates. And they, too, though they were borne too rapidly by Aram to be able to rein in their horses on the spot, had seen the solitary traveller, and already wheeled round, and called upon him to halt.

The lightning was again gone, and the darkness snatched the robbers and their intended victim from the sight of each other. But Aram had not lost a moment,—fast fled his horse across the moor; and when, with the next flash, he looked back, he saw that the ruffians, unwilling, even for booty, to encounter the horrors of the night, had followed him but a few paces, and again turned round. Still he dashed on, and had now nearly passed the moor. The thunder rolled fainter and fainter from behind, and the lightning only broke forth at prolonged intervals, when suddenly, after a pause of unusual duration, it brought the whole scene into a light, if less intolerable, even more livid than before. The horse, that had hitherto sped on without start or stumble, now recoiled in abrupt affright; and the horseman, looking up at the cause, beheld the gibbet of which Houseman had spoken, immediately fronting his path, with its ghastly tenant waving to and fro as the winds rattled through the parched and arid bones, and the inexpressible grin of the skull fixed, as in mockery, upon his countenance.

BOOK IV.

Ἡ Κύπρις οὐ πάνδημος· ἱλάσχεο τὴν θεὸν εἰπὼν
Οὐρανιάν. —

. . . . . .

Πραξινόη. Θάρσε, Ζωπυρίων, γλυκερὸν τέκος, οὐ λέγω ἀπφῦν.
Γοργώ. Αἰσθάνεται τὸ βρέφος, ναὶ τὰν πότνιαν.

The Venus, not the vulgar! propitiate the divinity, terming her the Uranian.

. . . . . .

PRAXINOE. Be of good cheer, Zopyrion, dear child, I do not speak of thy father.

GORGO. The boy comprehends, by Proserpine! — THEOCRITUS.

CHAPTER I.

IN WHICH WE RETURN TO WALTER.— HIS DEBT OF GRATITUDE TO MR. PERTINAX FILLGRAVE.— THE CORPORAL'S ADVICE AND THE CORPORAL'S VICTORY.

LET a physician be ever so excellent, there will be those that censure him. — *Gil Blas.*

WE left Walter in a situation of that critical nature that it would be inhuman to delay our return to him any longer. The blow by which he had been felled stunned him for an instant; but his frame was of no common strength and hardihood, and the imminent peril in which he was placed served to recall him from the momentary insensibility. On recovering himself, he felt that the ruffians were dragging him towards the hedge, and the thought flashed upon him that their object was murder. Nerved by this idea, he collected his strength, and suddenly wresting himself from the grasp of one of the ruffians, who had seized him by the collar, he had already gained his

knee, and now his feet, when a second blow once more deprived him of sense.

When a dim and struggling consciousness recurred to him, he found that the villains had dragged him to the opposite side of the hedge, and were deliberately robbing him. He was on the point of renewing a useless and dangerous struggle, when one of the ruffians said,—

"I think he stirs. I had better draw my knife across his throat."

"Pooh, no!" replied another voice; "never kill if it can be helped. Trust me, 't is an ugly thing to think of afterwards. Besides, what use is it? A robbery in these parts is done and forgotten; but a murder rouses the whole country."

"Damnation, man! Why, the deed 's done already; he 's as dead as a door-nail."

"Dead!" said the other, in a startled voice, "no, no!" and leaning down, the ruffian placed his hand on Walter's heart. The unfortunate traveller felt his flesh creep as the hand touched him, but prudently abstained from motion or exclamation. He thought, however, as with dizzy and half-shut eyes he caught the shadowy and dusky outline of the face that bent over him, so closely that he felt the breath of its lips, that it was a face he had seen before; and as the man now rose, and the wan light of the skies gave a somewhat clearer view of his features, the supposition was heightened, though not absolutely confirmed. But Walter had no further power to observe his plunderers: again his brain reeled; the dark trees the grim shadows of human forms, swam before his glazing eye, and he sank once more into a profound insensibility.

Meanwhile the doughty corporal had, at the first sight of his master's fall, halted abruptly at the spot to which his steed had carried him; and coming rapidly to the conclusion that three men were best encountered at a distance, he fired his two pistols, and without staying to see if they took effect, — which, indeed, they did not, — galloped down the precipitous hill with as much despatch as if it had been the last stage to "Lunnun."

"My poor young master!" muttered he. "But if the worst comes to the worst, the chief part of the money 's in the saddle-bags, any how; and so, messieurs thieves, you 're bit, baugh!"

The corporal was not long in reaching the town and alarming the loungers at the inn-door. A *posse comitatus* was soon formed; and armed as if they were to have encountered all the robbers between Hounslow and the Apennines, a band of heroes, with the corporal, who had first deliberately reloaded his pistols, at their head, set off to succor "the poor gentleman *what* was already murdered."

They had not got far before they found Walter's horse, which had luckily broken from the robbers, and was now quietly regaling himself on a patch of grass by the roadside. "*He* can get *his* supper, the beast!" grunted the corporal, thinking of his own, and bade one of the party try to catch the animal,—which, however, would have declined all such proffers, had not a long neigh of recognition from the Roman nose of the corporal's steed, striking familiarly on the straggler's ear, called it forthwith to the corporal's side, and (while the two chargers exchanged greeting) the corporal seized its rein.

When they came to the spot from which the robbers had made their sally, all was still and tranquil; no Walter was to be seen. The corporal cautiously dismounted, and searched about with as much minuteness as if he were looking for a pin; but the host of the inn at which the travellers had dined the day before stumbled at once on the right track. Gouts of blood on the white, chalky soil directed him to the hedge, and creeping through a small and recent gap, he discovered the yet breathing body of the young traveller.

Walter was now conducted with much care to the inn. A surgeon was already in attendance; for having heard that a gentleman had been murdered without his knowledge, Mr. Pertinax Fillgrave had rushed from his house and placed himself on the road, that the poor creature might not, at least, be buried without his assistance. So eager was he to begin that he scarce suffered the unfortunate Walter to be taken within

before he whipped out his instruments and set to work with the smack of an amateur.

Although the surgeon declared his patient to be in the greatest possible danger, the sagacious corporal, who thought himself privileged to know more about wounds than any man of peace by profession, however destructive by practice, could possibly be, had himself examined those his master had received before he went down to taste his long-delayed supper; and he now confidently assured the landlord and the rest of the good company in the kitchen that the blows on the head had been mere flea-bites, and that his master would be as well as ever in a week at the furthest.

And, indeed, when Walter the very next morning woke from the stupor, rather than the sleep, he had undergone, he felt himself surprisingly better than the surgeon, producing his probe, hastened to assure him he possibly *could* be.

By the help of Mr. Pertinax Fillgrave, Walter was detained several days in the town; nor is it wholly improbable but that for the dexterity of the corporal he might be in the town to this day,—not, indeed, in the comfortable shelter of the old-fashioned inn, but in the colder quarters of a certain green spot in which, despite of its rural attractions, few persons are willing to fix a permanent habitation.

Luckily, however, one evening, the corporal, who had been, to say truth, very regular in his attendance on his master,—for, bating the selfishness consequent, perhaps, on his knowledge of the world, Jacob Bunting was a good-natured man on the whole, and liked his master as well as he did anything, always excepting Jacobina and board-wages,—one evening, we say, the corporal, coming into Walter's apartment, found him sitting up in his bed, with a very melancholy and dejected expression of countenance.

"And well, sir, what does the doctor say?" asked the corporal, drawing aside the curtains.

"Ah! Bunting, I fancy it 's all over with me!"

"The Lord forbid, sir! You 're a jesting, surely!"

"Jesting, my good fellow; ah! just get me that phial."

"The filthy stuff!" said the corporal, with a wry face.

"Well, sir, if I had had the dressing of you, been half way to Yorkshire by this. Man 's a worm, and when a doctor gets 'un on his hook, he is sure to angle for the devil with the bait, augh!"

"What! you really think that d—d fellow Fillgrave is keeping me on in this way?"

"Is he a fool to give up three phials a day, 4*s*. 6*d*. item, ditto, ditto?" cried the corporal, as if astonished at the question. "But don't you feel yourself getting a deal better every day? Don't you feel all this 'ere stuff revive you?"

"No, indeed, I was amazingly better the first day than I am now; I make progress from worse to worse. Ah! Bunting, if Peter Dealtry were here, he might help me to an appropriate epitaph; as it is, I suppose I shall be very simply labelled. Fillgrave will do the whole business, and put it down in his bill: item, nine draughts; item, one epitaph."

"Lord a mercy, your honor!" said the corporal, drawing out a little red-spotted pocket-handkerchief, "how can jest so? It 's quite moving."

"I wish *we* were moving!" sighed the patient.

"And so we might be," cried the corporal; "so we might, if you 'd pluck up a bit. Just let me look at your honor's head; I knows what a confusion is better nor any of 'em."

The corporal, having obtained permission, now removed the bandages wherewith the doctor had bound his intended sacrifice to Pluto; and after peering into the wounds for about a minute, he thrust out his under-lip with a contemptuous —

"Pshaugh! augh! And how long," said he, "does Master Fillgrave say you be to be under his hands? augh!"

"He gives me hopes that I may be taken out an airing very gently (yes, hearses always go very gently!) in about three weeks!"

The corporal started, and broke into a long whistle. He then grinned from ear to ear, snapped his fingers, and said, "Man of the world, sir, man of the world, every inch of him!"

"He seems resolved that I shall be a man of another world!" said Walter.

"Tell ye what, sir, take my advice,—your honor knows I be no fool,—throw off them 'ere wrappers; let me put on a scrap of plaster; pitch phials to the devil; order out horses to-morrow; and when you 've been in the air half an hour, won't know yourself again!"

"Bunting! the horses out to-morrow? Faith, I don't think I could walk across the room."

"Just try, your honor."

"Ah! I 'm very weak, very weak,—my dressing-gown and slippers. Your arm, Bunting— Well, upon my honor, I walk very stoutly, eh? I should not have thought this! Leave go: why, I really get on without your assistance!"

"Walk as well as ever you did."

"Now I 'm out of bed, I don't think I shall go back again to it."

"Would not, if I was your honor."

"After so much exercise, I really fancy I 've a sort of an appetite."

"Like a beefsteak?"

"Nothing better."

"Pint of wine?"

"Why, that would be too much, eh?"

"Not it."

"Go then, my good Bunting, go, and make haste. Stop, I say, that d—d fellow—"

"Good sign to swear," interrupted the corporal; "swore twice within last five minutes,—famous symptom!"

"Do you choose to hear me? That d—d fellow Fillgrave is coming back in an hour to bleed me: do you mount guard; refuse to let him in; pay him his bill,—you have the money. And hark ye, don't be rude to the rascal."

"Rude, your honor! Not I,—been in the Forty-second; knows discipline,—only rude to the privates!"

The corporal having seen his master conduct himself respectably towards the viands with which he supplied him, having set his room to rights, brought him the candles, borrowed him a book, and left him, for the present, in extremely good spirits, and prepared for the flight of the morrow,—the

corporal, I say, now lighting his pipe, stationed himself at the door of the inn and waited for Mr. Pertinax Fillgrave. Presently the doctor, who was a little, thin man, came bustling across the street, and was about, with a familiar "Good evening," to pass by the corporal, when that worthy, dropping his pipe, said respectfully, "Beg pardon, sir, want to speak to you, — a little favor. Will your honor walk into the back parlor?"

"Oh! another patient," thought the doctor; "these soldiers are careless fellows,— often get into scrapes. Yes, friend, I 'm at your service."

The corporal showed the man of phials into the back parlor, and, hemming thrice, looked sheepish, as if in doubt how to begin. It was the doctor's business to encourage the bashful.

"Well, my good man," said he, brushing off, with the arm of his coat, some dust that had settled on his inexpressibles, "so you want to consult me?"

"Indeed, your honor, I do; but I feel a little awkward in doing so,— a stranger and all."

"Pooh! medical men are never strangers. I am the friend of every man who requires my assistance."

"Augh! and I do require your honor's assistance very sadly."

"Well, well, speak out. Anything of long standing?"

"Why, only since we have been here, sir."

"Oh, that 's all! Well?"

"Your honor 's so good that won't scruple in telling you all. You sees as how we were robbed,— master, at least, was,— had some little in my pockets; but we poor servants are never too rich. You seem such a kind gentleman — so attentive to master, though you must have felt how disinterested it was to tend a man what had been robbed — that I have no hesitation in making bold to ask you to lend us a few guineas, just to help us out with the bill here, bother!"

"Fellow!" said the doctor, rising, "I don't know what you mean; but I 'd have you to learn that I am not to be cheated out of my time and property. I shall insist upon being paid *my* bill instantly, before I dress your master's wound once more!"

"Augh!" said the corporal, who was delighted to find the doctor come so immediately into the snare, "won't be so cruel, surely! Why, you 'll leave us without a shiner to pay my host here!"

"Nonsense! Your master, if he 's a gentleman, can write home for money."

"Ah, sir, all very well to say so; but between you and me and the bed-post, young master 's quarrelled with old master; old master won't give him a rap. So I 'm sure, since your honor 's a friend to every man who requires your assistance, — noble saying, sir! — you won't refuse us a few guineas. And as for your bill, why — "

"Sir, you 're an impudent vagabond!" cried the doctor, as red as a rose-draught, and flinging out of the room; "and I warn you that I shall bring in my bill, and expect to be paid within ten minutes."

The doctor waited for no answer; he hurried home, scratched off his account, and flew back with it in as much haste as if his patient had been a month longer under his care, and was consequently on the brink of that happier world where, since the inhabitants are immortal, it is very evident that doctors, as being useless, are never admitted.

The corporal met him as before.

"There, sir!" cried the doctor, breathlessly; and then, putting his arms akimbo, "take that to your master, and desire him to pay me instantly."

"Augh! and shall do no such thing."

"You won't?"

"No, for shall pay you myself. Where 's your receipt, eh?"

And with great composure the corporal drew out a well-filled purse and discharged the bill. The doctor was so thunder-stricken that he pocketed the money without uttering a word. He consoled himself, however, with the belief that Walter, whom he had tamed into a becoming hypochondria, would be sure to send for him the next morning. Alas for mortal expectations! The next morning Walter was once more on the road.

CHAPTER II.

NEW TRACES OF THE FATE OF GEOFFREY LESTER.—WALTER AND THE CORPORAL PROCEED ON A FRESH EXPEDITION.—THE CORPORAL IS ESPECIALLY SAGACIOUS ON THE OLD TOPIC OF THE WORLD.—HIS OPINIONS OF THE MEN WHO CLAIM KNOWLEDGE THEREOF; ON THE ADVANTAGES ENJOYED BY A VALET; ON THE SCIENCE OF SUCCESSFUL LOVE; ON VIRTUE AND THE CONSTITUTION; ON QUALITIES TO BE DESIRED IN A MISTRESS, ETC.—A LANDSCAPE.

This way of talking of his very much enlivens the conversation among us of a more sedate turn.—*Spectator*, No. III.

Walter found, while he made search himself, that it was no easy matter, in so large a county as Yorkshire, to obtain even the preliminary particulars; namely, the place of residence and the name of the colonel from India whose dying gift his father had left the house of the worthy Courtland to claim and receive. But the moment he committed the inquiry to the care of an active and intelligent lawyer, the case seemed to brighten up prodigiously; and Walter was shortly informed that a Colonel Elmore, who had been in India, had died in the year 17—; that by a reference to his will it appeared that he had left to Daniel Clarke the sum of a thousand pounds and the house in which he resided before his death,—the latter, being merely leasehold, at a high rent, was specified in the will to be of small value; it was situated in the outskirts of Knaresborough. It was also discovered that a Mr. Jonas Elmore, the only surviving executor of the will, and a distant relation of the deceased colonel, lived about fifty miles from York, and could, in all probability, better than any one afford Walter those further particulars of which he was so desirous to be informed. Walter immediately proposed to his lawyer to accompany him to this gentleman's house; but it so happened that the lawyer could not, for three or four days, leave

his business at York; and Walter, exceedingly impatient to proceed on the intelligence thus granted him, and disliking the meagre information obtained from letters when a personal interview could be obtained, resolved himself to repair to Mr. Jonas Elmore's without further delay. And behold, therefore, our worthy corporal and his master again mounted, and commencing a new journey.

The corporal, always fond of adventure, was in high spirits.

"See, sir," said he to his master, patting with great affection the neck of his steed, "see, sir, how brisk the creturs are; what a deal of good their long rest at York city 's done 'em! Ah, your honor, what a fine town that 'ere be! Yet," added the corporal, with an air of great superiority, "it gives you no notion of Lunnon like; on the faith of a man, no!"

"Well, Bunting, perhaps we may be in London within a month hence."

"And afore we gets there, your honor,—no offence,—but should like to give you some advice; 't is ticklish place that Lunnon; and though you be by no manner of means deficient in genius, yet, sir, *you be* young, and *I* be —"

"*Old*,—true, Bunting," added Walter, very gravely.

"Augh, bother! old, sir? old, sir? A man in the prime of life, hair coal black (bating a few gray ones that have had since twenty, — care, and military service, sir), carriage straight, teeth strong, not an ail in the world bating the rheumatics, is not old, sir, not by no manner of means, baugh!"

"You are very right, Bunting; when I said 'old,' I meant 'experienced.' I assure you I shall be very grateful for your advice; and suppose, while we walk our horses up this hill, you begin lecture the first. London 's a fruitful subject; all you can say on it will not be soon exhausted."

"Ah! may well say that," replied the corporal, exceedingly flattered with the permission he had obtained; "and anything my poor wit can suggest, quite at your honor's sarvice, ehem, hem! You must know by Lunnon I means the world, and by the world means Lunnon; know one,—know t' other. But 't is not them as affects to be most knowing as be so at bottom.

Begging your honor's pardon, I thinks gentlefolks what lives only with gentlefolks, and calls themselves men of the world, be often no wiser nor Pagan creturs, and live in a Gentile darkness."

"The true knowledge of the world," said Walter, "is only then for the corporals of the Forty-second, eh, Bunting?"

"As to that, sir," quoth the corporal, "'t is not being of this calling or of that calling that helps one on; 't is an inborn sort of genus, the talent of obsarving, and growing wise by obsarving. One picks up crumb here, crumb there; but if one has not good digestion, Lord, what sinnifies a feast? Healthy man thrives on a 'tato; sickly looks pale on a haunch. You sees, your honor, as I said afore, I was own sarvant to Colonel Dysart; he was a lord's nephy, a very gay gentleman, and great hand with the ladies,—not a man more in the world; so I had the opportunity of larning what's what among the best set,—at his honor's expense, too, augh! To my mind, sir, there is not a place from which a man has a better view of things than the bit carpet behind a gentleman's chair. The gentleman eats and talks and swears and jests and plays cards and makes love and tries to cheat, and is cheated, and his man stands behind with his eyes and ears open, augh!"

"One should go into service to learn diplomacy, I see," said Walter, greatly amused.

"Does not know what 'plomacy be, sir, but knows it would be better for many a young master nor all the colleges,—would not be so many bubbles if my lord could take a turn now and then with John. A well, sir, how I used to laugh in my sleeve like, when I saw my master, who was thought the knowingest gentleman about court, taken in every day smack afore my face. There was one lady whom he had tried hard, as he thought, to get away from her husband; and he used to be so mighty pleased at every glance from her brown eyes,—and be d—d to them!—and so careful the husband should not see, so pluming himself on his discretion here, and his conquest there, when, Lord bless you, it was all settled 'twixt man and wife aforehand! And while the colonel laughed at the cuckold, the cuckold laughed at the dupe. For

you sees, sir, as how the colonel was a rich man, and the jewels as he bought for the lady went half into the husband's pocket, he! he! That 's the way of the world, sir; that 's the way of the world!"

"Upon my word, you draw a very bad picture of the world; you color highly. And by the way, I observe that whenever you find any man committing a roguish action, instead of calling him a scoundrel, you show those great teeth of yours and chuckle out, 'A man of the world! a man of the world!'"

"To be sure, your honor; the proper name too. 'T is your greenhorns who fly into a passion and use hard words. You see, sir, there 's one thing we larn afore all other things in the world,—to butter bread. Knowledge of others means only the knowledge which side bread 's buttered. In short, sir, the wiser grow, the more take care of oursels. Some persons make a mistake, and in trying to take care of themsels, run neck into halter. Baugh! they are not rascals, they are *would-be* men of the world. Others be more prudent (for, as I said afore, sir, discretion is a pair of stirrups),—*they* be the true men of the world."

"I should have thought," said Walter, "that the knowledge of the world might be that knowledge which preserves us from being cheated, but not that which enables us to cheat."

"Augh!" quoth the corporal, with that sort of smile with which you see an old philosopher put down a high-sounding error from a young disciple who flatters himself he has uttered something prodigiously fine,—"augh! and did I not tell you, t' other day, to look at the professions, your honor? What would a laryer be if he did not know how to cheat a witness and humbug a jury? Knows he is lying. Why is he lying? For love of his fees, or his fame like, which gets fees. Augh! is not that cheating others? The doctor, too, —Master Fillgrave, for instance?"

"Say no more of doctors; I abandon them to your satire, without a word."

"The lying knaves! Don't they say one 's well when one 's ill,—ill when one 's well? Profess to know what don't know? Thrust solemn phizzes into every abomination, as if

larning lay hid in a —— ? and all for their neighbor's money, or their own reputation, which makes money, augh! In short, sir, look where will, impossible to see so much cheating allowed, praised, encouraged, and feel very angry with a cheat who has only made a mistake. But when I sees a man butter his bread carefully,— knife steady, butter thick, and hungry fellows looking on and licking chops, mothers stopping their brats, 'See, child, respectable man, how thick his bread 's buttered! pull off your hat to him,'— when I sees that, my heart warms; there 's the *true* man of the world, augh!"

"Well, Bunting," said Walter, laughing, "though you are thus lenient to those unfortunate gentlemen whom others call rogues, and thus laudatory of gentlemen who are at best discreetly selfish, I suppose you admit the possibility of virtue, and your heart warms as much when you see a man of worth as when you see a man of the world?"

"Why, you knows, your honor," answered the corporal, "so far as vartue 's concerned, there 's a deal in constitution; but as for knowledge of the world, one gets it oneself!"

"I don't wonder, Bunting, as your opinion of women is much the same as your opinion of men, that you are still unmarried."

"Augh! but your honor mistakes; I am no mice-and-trope. Men are neither one thing nor t' other, neither good nor bad. A prudent parson has nothing to fear from 'em, nor a foolish one anything to gain, baugh! As to the women creturs, your honor, as I said, vartue 's a deal in the constitution. Would not ask what a lassie's mind be, nor what her eddycation, but see what her habits be, that 's all,— habits and constitution all one; play into one another's hands."

"And what sort of signs, Bunting, would you mostly esteem in a lady?"

"First place, sir, woman I 'd marry must not mope when alone; must be able to 'muse herself, must be easily 'mused. That 's a great sign, sir, of an innocent mind, to be tickled with straws. Besides, employment keeps 'em out of harm's way. Second place, should obsarve if she was very fond of

places, your honor,—sorry to move; that's a sure sign she won't tire easily, but that if she like you now from fancy, she'll like you by and by from custom. Thirdly, your honor, she should not be avarse to dress,—a leaning that way shows she has a desire to please; people who don't care about pleasing always sullen. Fourthly, she must bear to be crossed,—I'd be quite sure that she might be contradicted, without mumping or storming; 'cause then, you knows, your honor, if she wanted anything expensive, need not give it, augh! Fifthly, must not set up for a saint, your honor. They pye-house she-creaturs always thinks themsels so much better nor we men,—don't understand our language and ways, your honor; they wants us not only to belave, but to tremble, bother!"

"I like your description well enough on the whole," said Walter, "and when I look out for a wife I shall come to you for advice."

"Your honor may have it already,—Miss Ellinor's jist the thing."

Walter turned away his head, and told Bunting, with great show of indignation, not to be a fool.

The corporal, who was not quite certain of his ground here, but who knew that Madeline, at all events, was going to be married to Aram, and deemed it, therefore, quite useless to waste any praise upon *her*, thought that a few random shots of eulogium were worth throwing away on a chance, and consequently continued,—

"Augh, your honor, 't is not 'cause I have eyes that I be's a fool. Miss Ellinor and your honor be only cousins, to be sure; but more like brother and sister nor anything else. Howsomever, she's a rare cretur, whoever gets her,—has a face that puts one in good humor with the world, if one sees it first thing in the morning; 't is as good as the sun in July, augh! But, as I was saying, your honor, 'bout the women creturs in general—"

"Enough of them, Bunting! Let us suppose you have been so fortunate as to find one to suit you,—how would you woo her? Of course there are certain secrets of courtship which

you will not hesitate to impart to one who, like me, wants such assistance from art,— much more than you can do, who are so bountifully favored by nature."

"As to nature," replied the corporal, with considerable modesty, for he never disputed the truth of the compliment, "'t is not 'cause a man be six feet without 's shoes that he 's any nearer to lady's heart. Sir, I will own to you — howsomever it makes 'gainst your honor, and myself for that matter — that don't think one is a bit more lucky with the ladies for being so handsome. 'T is all very well with them 'ere willing ones, your honor,— caught at a glance; but as for the better sort, one's beauty 's all bother! Why, sir, when we see some of the most fortunatest men among she-creturs, what poor little minnikens they be! One 's a dwarf, another knock-kneed, a third squints, and a fourth might be shown for a *h*ape! Neither, sir, is it your soft, insinivating, die-away youths, as seem at first so seductive; they do very well for lovers, your honor, but then it 's always — rejected ones! Neither, your honor, does the art of succeeding with the ladies 'quire all those finnikin nimini-pinimis, flourishes and maxims and saws, which the colonel, my old master, and the great gentlefolks, as be knowing, call the art of love, baugh! The whole science, sir, consists in these two rules: 'Ax soon, and ax often.'"

"There seems no great difficulty in them, Bunting."

"Not to us who has gumption, sir; but then there is summut in the manner of axing,— one can't be too hot; can't flatter too much; and, above all, one must never take a refusal. There, sir, now, if you takes my advice may break the peace of all the husbands in Lunnon; bother, whaugh!"

"My uncle little knows what a praiseworthy tutor he has secured me in you, Bunting," said Walter, laughing; "and now, while the road is so good, let us make the most of it."

As they had set out late in the day, and the corporal was fearful of another attack from a hedge, he resolved that about evening one of the horses should be seized with a sudden lameness (which he effected by slyly inserting a stone between the shoe and the hoof) that required immediate atten-

tion and a night's rest; so that it was not till the early noon of the next day that our travellers entered the village in which Mr. Jonas Elmore resided.

It was a soft, tranquil day, though one of the very last in October; for the reader will remember that time had not stood still during Walter's submission to the care of Mr. Pertinax Fillgrave and his subsequent journey and researches.

The sunlight rested on a broad patch of green heath covered with furze, and around it were scattered the cottages and farm-houses of the little village. On the other side, as Walter descended the gentle hill that led into this remote hamlet, wide and flat meadows, interspersed with several fresh and shaded ponds, stretched away towards a belt of rich woodland gorgeous with the melancholy pomp by which the "regal year" seeks to veil its decay. Among these meadows you might now see groups of cattle quietly grazing, or standing half hid in the still and sheltered pools. Still farther, crossing to the woods, a solitary sportsman walked careless on, surrounded by some half-a-dozen spaniels; and the shrill small tongue of one younger straggler of the canine crew, who had broken indecorously from the rest and already entered the wood, might be just heard, softened down by the distance, into a wild, cheery sound, that animated, without disturbing, the serenity of the scene.

"After all," said Walter aloud, "the scholar was right,—there is nothing like the country!

> "'Oh, happiness of sweet, retired content,
> To be at once secure and innocent!'"

"Be them verses in the Psalms, sir?" said the corporal, who was close behind.

"No, Bunting, but they were written by one who, if I recollect right, set the Psalms to verse.[1] I hope they meet with your approbation?"

"Indeed, sir, and no, since they be n't in the Psalms."

"And why, Mr. Critic?"

"'Cause what 's the use of security if one 's innocent, and

[1] Denham.

does not mean to take advantage of it? Baugh! One does not lock the door for nothing, your honor!"

"You shall enlarge on that honest doctrine of yours another time; meanwhile, call that shepherd and ask the way to Mr. Elmore's."

The corporal obeyed, and found that a clump of trees, at the farther corner of the waste land, was the grove that surrounded Mr. Elmore's house. A short canter across the heath brought them to a white gate, and having passed this, a comfortable brick mansion, of moderate size, stood before them.

CHAPTER III.

A SCHOLAR, BUT OF A DIFFERENT MOULD FROM THE STUDENT OF GRASSDALE.—NEW PARTICULARS CONCERNING GEOFFREY LESTER.—THE JOURNEY RECOMMENCED.

INSENUITQUE
Libris.[1] — HORACE.

Volat, ambiguis
Mobilis alis, Hora.[2] — SENECA.

UPON inquiring for Mr. Elmore, Walter was shown into a handsome library that appeared well stocked with books of that good old-fashioned size and solidity which are now fast passing from the world, or at least shrinking into old shops and public collections. The time may come when the mouldering remains of a folio will attract as much philosophical astonishment as the bones of the mammoth. For behold, the deluge of writers hath produced a new world of small octavo; and in the next generation, thanks to the popular libraries, we shall only vibrate between the duodecimo and the diamond edition. Nay, we foresee the time when a very handsome collection may be carried about in one's waistcoat pocket, and a

[1] "And he hath grown old in books."

[2] "Time flies, still moving on uncertain wing."

whole library of the British Classics be neatly arranged in a well-compacted snuff-box.

In a few minutes Mr. Elmore made his appearance. He was a short, well-built man, about the age of fifty. Contrary to the established mode, he wore no wig, and was very bald, except at the sides of the head, and a little circular island of hair in the centre. But this defect was rendered the less visible by a profusion of powder. He was dressed with evident care and precision. A snuff-colored coat was adorned with a respectable profusion of gold lace; his breeches were of plum-colored satin; his salmon-colored stockings, scrupulously drawn up, displayed a very handsome calf; and a pair of steel buckles, in his high-heeled and square-toed shoes, were polished into a lustre which almost rivalled the splendor of diamonds. Mr. Jonas Elmore was a beau, a wit, and a scholar of the old school. He abounded in jests, in quotations, in smart sayings and pertinent anecdotes; but, withal, his classical learning (out of the classics he knew little enough) was at once elegant but wearisome, pedantic but profound.

To this gentleman Walter presented a letter of introduction which he had obtained from a distinguished clergyman in York. Mr. Elmore received it with a profound salutation.

"Aha! from my friend Dr. Hebraist," said he, glancing at the seal,—"a most worthy man and a ripe scholar. I presume at once, sir, from his introduction that you yourself have cultivated the *literas humaniores.* Pray sit down. Ay, I see, you take up a book,—an excellent symptom; it gives me an immediate insight into your character. But you have chanced, sir, on light reading,—one of the Greek novels, I think; you must not judge of my studies by such a specimen."

"Nevertheless, sir, it does not seem to my unskilful eye very easy Greek."

"Pretty well, sir; barbarous, but amusing,—pray continue it. The triumphal entry of Paulus Emilius is not ill told. I confess that I think novels might be made much higher works than they have been yet. Doubtless you remember what Aristotle says concerning painters and sculptors, 'That they teach and recommend virtue in a more efficacious and power

ful manner than philosophers by their dry precepts, and are more capable of amending the vicious than the best moral lessons without such aid.' But how much more, sir, can a good novelist do this than the best sculptor or painter in the world! Every one can be charmed by a fine novel, few by a fine painting. 'Docti rationem artis intelligunt, indocti voluptatem.'[1] A happy sentence that in Quintilian, sir, is it not? But, bless me, I am forgetting the letter of my good friend Dr. Hebraist. The charms of your conversation carry me away. And, indeed, I have seldom the happiness to meet a gentleman so well-informed as yourself. I confess, sir, I confess that I still retain the tastes of my boyhood; the Muses cradled my childhood,—they now smooth the pillow on my footstool, —'Quem tu, Melpomene' etc. You are not yet subject to gout,—*dira podagra.* By the way, how is the worthy doctor since his attack? Ah! see now, if you have not still, by your delightful converse, kept me from his letter. Yet, positively I need no introduction to you; Apollo has already presented you to me. And as for the Doctor's letter, I will read it after dinner; for, as Seneca—"

"I beg your pardon a thousand times, sir," said Walter, who began to despair of ever coming to the matter, which seemed lost sight of beneath this battery of erudition; "but you will find by Dr. Hebraist's letter that it is only on business of the utmost importance that I have presumed to break in upon the learned leisure of Mr. Jonas Elmore."

"Business!" replied Mr. Elmore, producing his spectacles, and deliberately placing them athwart his nose,—

"'His mane edictum, post prandia Callirhoën,' etc.

Business in the morning, and the ladies after dinner. Well, sir, I will yield to you in the one, and you must yield to me in the other; I will open the letter, and you shall dine here and be introduced to Mrs. Elmore. What is your opinion of the modern method of folding letters? I— But I see you are impatient." Here Mr. Elmore at length broke the seal, and to Walter's great joy fairly read the contents within.

[1] "The learned understand the reason of art, the unlearned the pleasure."

"Oh! I see, I see," he said, refolding the epistle and placing it in his pocket-book; "my friend Dr. Hebraist says you are anxious to be informed whether Mr. Clarke ever received the legacy of my poor cousin, Colonel Elmore, and if so, any tidings I can give you of Mr. Clarke himself, or any clew to discover him, will be highly acceptable. I gather, sir, from my friend's letter that this is the substance of your business with me,— *caput negotii;* although, like Timanthes the painter, he leaves more to be understood than is described, 'intelligitur plus quam pingitur,' as Pliny has it."

"Sir," says Walter, drawing his chair close to Mr. Elmore, and his anxiety forcing itself to his countenance, "that is indeed the substance of my business with you; and so important will be any information you can give me that I shall esteem it a—"

"Not a very great favor, eh,—not very great?"

"Yes, indeed, a very great obligation."

"I hope not, sir; for what says Tacitus, that profound reader of the human heart? 'Beneficia eo usque læta sunt,' etc.,—favors easily repaid beget affection,—favors beyond return engender hatred.' But, sir, a truce to trifling;" and here Mr. Elmore composed his countenance and changed—which he could do at will, so that the change was not expected to last long—the pedant for the man of business.

"Mr. Clarke did receive his legacy; the lease of the house at Knaresborough was also sold by his desire, and produced the sum of seven hundred and fifty pounds,—which being added to the further sum of a thousand pounds, which was bequeathed to him, amounted to seventeen hundred and fifty pounds. It so happened that my cousin had possessed some very valuable jewels, which were bequeathed to myself. I, sir, studious and a cultivator of the Muse, had no love and no use for these baubles,—I preferred barbaric gold to barbaric pearl; and knowing that Clarke had been in India, whence these jewels had been brought, I showed them to him and consulted his knowledge on these matters, as to the best method of obtaining a sale. He offered to purchase them of me, under the impression that he could turn them to a profita-

ble speculation in London. Acccordingly we came to terms: I sold the greater part of them to him for a sum a little exceeding a thousand pounds. He was pleased with his bargain, and came to borrow the rest of me, in order to look at them more considerately at home, and determine whether or not he should buy them also. Well, sir (but here comes the remarkable part of the story), about three days after this last event Mr. Clarke and my jewels both disappeared in rather a strange and abrupt manner. In the middle of the night he left his lodging at Knaresborough and never returned; neither himself nor my jewels were ever heard of more."

"Good heavens!" exclaimed Walter, greatly agitated; "what was supposed to be the cause of his disappearance?"

"That," replied Elmore, "was never positively traced. It excited great surprise and great conjecture at the time. Advertisements and handbills were circulated throughout the country, but in vain. Mr. Clarke was evidently a man of eccentric habits, of a hasty temper, and a wandering manner of life; yet it is scarcely probable that he took this sudden manner of leaving the country either from whim or some secret but honest motive never divulged. The fact is that he owed a few debts in the town, that he had my jewels in his possession, and as (pardon me for saying this, since you take an interest in him) his connections were entirely unknown in these parts, and his character not very highly estimated, —whether from his manner, or his conversation, or some undefined and vague rumors, I cannot say,— it was considered by no means improbable that he had decamped with his property in this sudden manner in order to save himself that trouble of settling accounts which a more seemly and public method of departure might have rendered necessary. A man of the name of Houseman, with whom he was acquainted (a resident in Knaresborough), declared that Clarke had borrowed rather a considerable sum from him, and did not scruple openly to accuse him of the evident design to avoid repayment. A few more dark but utterly groundless conjectures were afloat; and since the closest search, the minutest inquiry, was employed without any result, the supposition that he

might have been robbed and murdered was strongly entertained for some time. But as his body was never found, nor suspicion directed against any particular person, these conjectures insensibly died away; and being so complete a stranger to these parts, the very circumstance of his disappearance was not likely to occupy, for very long, the attention of that old gossip the Public, who, even in the remotest parts, has a thousand topics to fill up her time and talk. And now, sir, I think you know as much of the particulars of the case as any one in these parts can inform you."

We may imagine the various sensations which this unsatisfactory intelligence caused in the adventurous son of the lost wanderer. He continued to throw out additional guesses, and to make further inquiries concerning a tale which seemed to him so mysterious, but without effect; and he had the mortification to perceive that the shrewd Jonas was, in his own mind, fully convinced that the permanent disappearance of Clarke was accounted for only by the most dishonest motives.

"And," added Elmore, "I am confirmed in this belief by discovering afterwards, from a tradesman in York who had seen my cousin's jewels, that those I had trusted to Mr. Clarke's hands were more valuable than I had imagined them, and therefore it was probably worth his while to make off with them as quietly as possible. He went on foot, leaving his horse, a sorry nag, to settle with me and the other claimants: —

"'I, pedes quo te rapiunt et auræ!'"[1]

"Heavens!" thought Walter, sinking back in his chair sickened and disheartened, "what a parent, if the opinions of all men who knew him be true, do I thus zealously seek to recover!"

The good-natured Elmore, perceiving the unwelcome and painful impression his account had produced on his young guest, now exerted himself to remove, or at least to lessen it; and turning the conversation into a classical channel, which with him was the Lethe to all cares, he soon forgot that

[1] "Go, where your feet and fortune take you."

Clarke had ever existed, in expatiating on the unappreciated excellences of Propertius, who, to his mind, was the most tender of all elegiac poets, solely because he was the most learned. Fortunately this vein of conversation, however tedious to Walter, preserved him from the necessity of rejoinder, and left him to the quiet enjoyment of his own gloomy and restless reflections.

At length the time touched upon dinner. Elmore, starting up, adjourned to the drawing-room, in order to present the handsome stranger to the *placens uxor*, the pleasing wife, whom, in passing through the hall, he eulogized with an amazing felicity of diction.

The object of these praises was a tall, meagre lady, in a yellow dress carried up to the chin, and who added a slight squint to the charms of red hair ill concealed by powder, and the dignity of a prodigiously high nose. "There is nothing, sir," said Elmore, "nothing, believe me, like matrimonial felicity. Julia, my dear, I trust the chickens will not be overdone."

"Indeed, Mr. Elmore, I cannot tell; I did not boil them."

"Sir," said Elmore, turning to his guest, "I do not know whether you will agree with me, but I think a slight tendency to gourmandism is absolutely necessary to complete the character of a truly classical mind. So many beautiful touches are there in the ancient poets, so many delicate allusions in history and in anecdote relating to the gratification of the palate, that if a man have no correspondent sympathy with the illustrious epicures of old, he is rendered incapable of enjoying the most beautiful passages that — Come, sir, the dinner is served.

"'Nutrimus lautis mollissima corpora mensis.'"[1]

As they crossed the hall to the dining-room, a young lady, whom Elmore hastily announced as his only daughter, appeared descending the stairs, having evidently retired for the purpose of re-arranging her attire for the conquest of the stranger. There was something in Miss Elmore that reminded Walter

[1] "We nourish softest bodies at luxurious banquets."

of Ellinor; and as the likeness struck him, he felt, by the sudden and involuntary sigh it occasioned, how much the image of his cousin had lately gained ground upon his heart.

Nothing of any note occurred during dinner until the appearance of the second course, when Elmore, throwing himself back with an air of content, which signified that the first edge of his appetite was blunted, observed,—

"Sir, the second course I always opine to be the more dignified and rational part of a repast,—

"'Quod nunc ratio est, impetus ante fuit.'"[1]

"Ah! Mr. Elmore," said the lady, glancing towards a brace of very fine pigeons, "I cannot tell you how vexed I am at a mistake of the gardener. You remember my poor pet pigeons, so attached to each other,—would not mix with the rest; quite an inseparable friendship, Mr. Lester. Well, they were killed, by mistake, for a couple of vulgar pigeons. Ah! I could not touch a bit of them for the world."

"My love," said Elmore, pausing, and with great solemnity, "hear how beautiful a consolation is afforded to you in Valerius Maximus: 'Ubi idem et maximus et honestissimus amor est, aliquando præstat morte jungi quam vita distrahi!' which being interpreted, means that wherever, as in the case of your pigeons, a thoroughly high and sincere affection exists, it is sometimes better to be joined in death than divided in life. Give me half the fatter one, if you please, Julia."

"Sir," said Elmore, when the ladies withdrew, "I cannot tell you how pleased I am to meet with a gentleman so deeply imbued with classic lore. I remember, several years ago, before my poor cousin died, it was my lot, when I visited him at Knaresborough, to hold some delightful conversations on learned matters with a very rising young scholar who then resided at Knaresborough, Eugene Aram,—conversations as difficult to obtain as delightful to remember, for he was exceedingly reserved."

"Aram!" repeated Walter.

"What, you know him then? And where does he live now?"

[1] "That which is now reason, at first was but desire."

"In ——, very near my uncle's residence. He is certainly a remarkable man."

"Yes, indeed he promised to become so. At the time I refer to, he was poor to penury, and haughty as poor; but it was wonderful to note the iron energy with which he pursued his progress to learning. Never did I see a youth,—at that time he was no more,—so devoted to knowledge for itself.

"'Doctrinæ pretium triste magister habit.'[1]

"Methinks," added Elmore, "I can see him now, stealing away from the haunts of men,—

"'With even step and musing gait,'—

across the quiet fields or into the woods, whence he was certain not to reappear till nightfall. Ah! he was a strange and solitary being, but full of genius, and promise of bright things hereafter. I have often heard since of his fame as a scholar, but could never learn where he lived, or what was now his mode of life. Is he yet married?"

"Not yet, I believe; but he is not now so absolutely poor as you describe him to have been then, though certainly far from rich."

"Yes, yes, I remember that he received a legacy from a relation shortly before he left Knaresborough. He had very delicate health at that time: has he grown stronger with increasing years?"

"He does not complain of ill-health. And, pray, was he then of the same austere and blameless habits of life that he now professes?"

"Nothing *could* be so faultless as his character appeared; the passions of youth (ah! *I* was a wild fellow at his age) never seemed to venture near one—

"'Quem casto erudit docta Minerva sinu.'[2]

"Well, I am surprised he has not married. We scholars, sir, fall in love with abstractions, and fancy the first woman we see is— Sir, let us drink 'The ladies.'"

[1] "The master has but sorry remuneration for his teaching."

[2] "Whom wise Minerva taught with bosom chaste."

The next day Walter, having resolved to set out for Knaresborough, directed his course towards that town; he thought it yet possible that he might, by strict personal inquiry, continue the clew that Elmore's account had, to present appearance, broken. The pursuit in which he was engaged, combined, perhaps, with the early disappointment to his affections, had given a grave and solemn tone to a mind naturally ardent and elastic. His character acquired an earnestness and a dignity from late events; and all that once had been hope within him deepened into thought. As now, on a gloomy and clouded day, he pursued his course along a bleak and melancholy road, his mind was filled with that dark presentiment, that shadow from the coming event which superstition believes the herald of the more tragic discoveries or the more fearful incidents of life; he felt steeled and prepared for some dread *dénouement* to a journey to which the hand of Providence seemed to conduct his steps; and he looked on the shroud that Time casts over all beyond the present moment with the same intense and painful resolve with which, in the tragic representations of life, we await the drawing up of the curtain before the last act, which contains the catastrophe that, while we long, we half shudder to behold.

Meanwhile, in following the adventures of Walter Lester we have greatly outstripped the progress of events at Grassdale, and thither we now return.

CHAPTER IV.

ARAM'S DEPARTURE.—MADELINE.—EXAGGERATION OF SENTIMENT NATURAL IN LOVE.—MADELINE'S LETTER.—WALTER'S.—THE WALK.—TWO VERY DIFFERENT PERSONS, YET BOTH INMATES OF THE SAME COUNTRY VILLAGE.—THE HUMORS OF LIFE AND ITS DARK PASSIONS ARE FOUND IN JUXTAPOSITION EVERYWHERE.

> HER thoughts, as pure as the chaste Morning's breath
> When from the Night's cold arms it creeps away,
> Were clothed in words.
>
> SIR J. SUCKLING: *Detraction Execrated.*

> Urticæ proxima sæpe rosa est.[1]—OVID.

"YOU positively leave us then to-day, Eugene?" said the squire.

"Indeed," answered Aram, "I hear from my creditor (now no longer so, thanks to you) that my relation is so dangerously ill that, if I have any wish to see her alive, I have not an hour to lose. It is the last surviving relative I have in the world."

"I can say no more, then," rejoined the squire, shrugging his shoulders. "When do you expect to return?"

"At least before the day fixed for the wedding," answered Aram, with a grave and melancholy smile.

"Well, can you find time, think you, to call at the lodging in which my nephew proposed to take up his abode,—*my* old lodging; I will give you the address,—and inquire if Walter has been heard of there? I confess that I feel considerable alarm on his account. Since that short and hurried letter which I read to you, I have heard nothing of him."

"You may rely on my seeing him if in London, and faithfully reporting to you all that I can learn towards removing your anxiety."

[1] "The rose is often nearest to the nettle."

"I do not doubt it,—no heart is so kind as yours, Eugene. You will not depart without receiving the additional sum you are entitled to claim from me, since you think it may be useful to you in London, should you find a favorable opportunity of increasing your annuity. And now I will no longer detain you from taking your leave of Madeline."

The plausible story which Aram had invented of the illness and approaching death of his last living relation, was readily believed by the simple family to whom it was told, and Madeline herself checked her tears, that she might not, for *his* sake, sadden a departure that seemed inevitable. Aram accordingly repaired to London that day,—the one that followed the night which witnessed his fearful visit to the Devil's Crag.

It is precisely at this part of my history that I love to pause for a moment,—a sort of breathing interval between the cloud that has been long gathering, and the storm that is about to burst. And this interval is not without its fleeting gleam of quiet and holy sunshine.

It was Madeline's first absence from her lover since their vows had plighted them to each other; and that first absence, when softened by so many hopes as smiled upon her, is perhaps one of the most touching passages in the history of a woman's love. It is marvellous how many things, unheeded before, suddenly become dear. She then feels what a power of consecration there was in the mere presence of the one beloved; the spot he touched, the book he read, have become a part of him, are no longer inanimate, are inspired, and have a being and a voice. And the heart, too, soothed in discovering so many new treasures, and opening so delightful a world of memory, is not yet acquainted with that weariness, that sense of exhaustion and solitude, which are the true pains of absence, and belong to the absence, not of hope, but regret.

"You are cheerful, dear Madeline," said Ellinor, "though you did not think it possible, and he not here!"

"I am occupied," replied Madeline, "in discovering how much I loved him."

We do wrong when we censure a certain exaggeration in the sentiments of those we love. True passion is necessarily heightened by its very ardor to an elevation that seems extravagant only to those who cannot feel it. The lofty language of a hero is a part of his character; without that largeness of idea he had not been a hero. With love it is the same as with glory: what common minds would call natural in sentiment, merely because it is homely, is not natural, except to tamed affections. That is a very poor, nay, a very coarse, love, in which the imagination makes not the greater part; and the Frenchman who censured the love of his mistress because it *was* so mixed with the imagination, quarrelled with the body for the soul which inspired and preserved it.

Yet we do not say that Madeline was so possessed by the confidence of her love that she did not admit the intrusion of a single doubt or fear. When she recalled the frequent gloom and moody fitfulness of her lover, his strange and mysterious communings with self, the sorrow which, at times, as on that Sabbath eve when he wept upon her bosom, appeared suddenly to come upon a nature so calm and stately, and without a visible cause,—when she recalled all these symptoms of a heart not now at rest, it was not possible for her to reject altogether a certain vague and dreary apprehension. Nor did she herself, although to Ellinor she so affected, ascribe this cloudiness and caprice of mood merely to the result of a solitary and meditative life; she attributed them to the influence of an early grief, perhaps linked with the affections, and did not doubt but that one day or another she should learn the secret. As for remorse, the memory of any former sin: a life so austerely blameless, a disposition so prompt to the activity of good and so enamoured of its beauty, a mind so cultivated, a temper so gentle, and a heart so easily moved,—all would have forbidden, to natures far more suspicious than Madeline's, the conception of such a thought. And so, with a patient gladness, though not without some mixture of anxiety, she suffered herself to glide onward to a future which, come cloud, come shine, was, she believed at least, to be shared with him.

On looking over the various papers from which I have woven this tale, I find a letter from Madeline to Aram dated at this time. The characters, traced in the delicate and fair Italian hand coveted at that period, are fading, and in one part wholly obliterated by time; but there seems to me so much of what is genuine in the heart's beautiful romance in this effusion that I will lay it before the reader without adding or altering a word: —

Thank you, thank you, dearest Eugene! I have received, then, the first letter you ever wrote me. I cannot tell you how strange it seemed to me, and how agitated I felt on seeing it, — more so, I think, than if it had been yourself who had returned. However, when the first delight of reading it faded away, I found that it had not made me so happy as it ought to have done, — as I thought at first it had done. You seem sad and melancholy; a certain nameless gloom appears to me to hang over your whole letter. It affects my spirits, — why, I know not, — and my tears fall even while I read the assurances of your unaltered, unalterable love; and yet this assurance your Madeline — vain girl! — never for a moment disbelieves. I have often read and often heard of the distrust and jealousy that accompany love; but I think that such a love must be a vulgar and low sentiment. To me there seems a religion in love, and its very foundation is in faith. You say, dearest, that the noise and the stir of the great city oppress and weary you even more than you had expected. You say those harsh faces, in which business and care and avarice and ambition write their lineaments, are wholly unfamiliar to you; you turn aside to avoid them; you wrap yourself up in your solitary feelings of aversion to those you see, and you call upon those not present, — upon your Madeline! And would that your Madeline were with you! It seems to me — perhaps you will smile when I say this — that I alone can understand you, I alone can read your heart and your emotions; and oh! dearest Eugene, that I could read also enough of your past history to know all that has cast so habitual a shadow over that lofty heart and that calm and profound nature! You smile when I ask you; but sometimes you sigh, and the sigh pleases and soothes me better than the smile. . . .

We have heard nothing more of Walter, and my father continues to be seriously alarmed about him. Your account too corroborates that alarm. It is strange that he has not yet visited London, and that you can obtain no clew of him. He is evidently still in search of his lost parent, and following some obscure and uncertain track. Poor Walter,

God speed him! The singular fate of his father, and the many conjectures respecting him, have, I believe, preyed on Walter's mind more than he acknowledged. Ellinor found a paper in his closet, where we had occasion to search the other day for something belonging to my father, which was scribbled with all the various fragments of guess or information concerning my uncle, obtained from time to time, and interspersed with some remarks by Walter himself that affected me strangely. It seems to have been, from early childhood, the one desire of my cousin to discover his father's fate. Perhaps the discovery may be already made; perhaps my long-lost uncle may yet be present at our wedding.

You ask me, Eugene, if I still pursue my botanical researches. Sometimes I do: but the flower now has no fragrance, and the herb no secret, that I care for; and astronomy, which you had just begun to teach me, pleases me more. The flowers charm me when you are present, but the stars speak to me of you in absence. Perhaps it would not be so had I loved a being less exalted than you. Every one, even my father, even Ellinor, smile when they observe how incessantly I think of you, — how utterly you have become all in all to me. I could not *tell* this to you, though I write it: is it not strange that letters should be more faithful than the tongue? And even *your* letter, mournful as it is, seems to me kinder and dearer and more full of yourself than, with all the magic of your language and the silver sweetness of your voice, your spoken words are. I walked by your house yesterday. The windows were closed; there was a strange air of lifelessness and dejection about it. Do you remember the evening in which I first entered that house? Do you — or rather is there one hour in which it is not present to you? For me, I live in the past; it is the present (which is without you) in which I have no life. I passed into the little garden, that with your own hands you have planted for me, and filled with flowers. Ellinor was with me, and she saw my lips move. She asked me what I was saying to myself. I would not tell her. I was praying for you, my kind, my beloved Eugene; I was praying for the happiness of your future years, — praying that I might requite your love. Whenever I feel the most, I am the most inclined to prayer. Sorrow, joy, tenderness, all emotion, lift up my heart to God. And what a delicious overflow of the heart is prayer! When I am with you, and I feel that you love me, my happiness would be painful if there were no God whom I might bless for its excess. Do those who believe not, love? Have they deep emotions? Can they feel truly, devotedly? Why, when I talk thus to you, do you always answer me with that chilling and mournful smile? You would rest religion only on reason, — as well limit love to the reason also! What were either without the feelings?

When, when, when will you return? I think I love you now more than ever. I think I have more courage to tell you so. So many things I have to say, so many events to relate. For what is not an event to us? The least incident that has happened to either, — the very fading of a flower, if you have worn it, — is a whole history to me.

Adieu! God bless you, God reward you, God keep your heart with him, dearest, dearest Eugene! And may you every day know better and better how utterly you are loved by your

MADELINE.

The epistle to which Lester referred, as received from Walter, was one written on the day of his escape from Mr. Pertinax Fillgrave, a short note rather than letter, which ran as follows: —

MY DEAR UNCLE, — I have met with an accident which confined me to my bed, — a rencontre, indeed, with the knights of the road; nothing serious (so do not be alarmed) though the doctor would fain have made it so. I am just about to recommence my journey, but not towards London; on the contrary, northward.

I have, partly through the information of your old friend Mr. Courtland, partly by accident, found what I hope may prove a clew to the fate of my father. I am now departing to put this hope to the issue. More I would fain say; but lest the expectation should prove fallacious, I will not dwell on circumstances which would, in that case, only create in you a disappointment similar to my own. Only this take with you, that my father's proverbial good luck seems to have visited him since your latest news of his fate, — a legacy, though not a large one, awaited his return to England from India. But see if I am not growing prolix already! I must break off, in order to reserve you the pleasure (may it be so!) of a full surprise.

God bless you, my dear uncle! I write in spirits and hope. Kindest love to all at home.

WALTER LESTER.

P. S. — Tell Ellinor that my bitterest misfortune in the adventure I have referred to was to be robbed of her purse. Will she knit me another? By the way, I encountered Sir Peter Hales: such an open-hearted, generous fellow as you said! "Thereby hangs a tale."

This letter, which provoked all the curiosity of our little circle, made them anxiously look forward to every post for

additional explanation, but that explanation came not; and they were forced to console themselves with the evident exhilaration under which Walter wrote, and the probable supposition that he delayed further information until it could be ample and satisfactory. "Knights of the road," quoth Lester, one day: "I wonder if they were any of the gang that have just visited us? Well, but, poor boy, he does not say whether he has any money left; yet if he *were* short of the gold, he would be very unlike his father (or his uncle, for that matter) had he forgotten to enlarge on that subject, however brief upon others."

"Probably," said Ellinor, "the corporal carried the main sum about him in those well-stuffed saddle-bags, and it was only the purse that Walter had about his person that was stolen; and it is clear that the corporal escaped, as he mentions nothing about that excellent personage."

"A shrewd guess, Nell; but pray why should Walter carry the purse about him so carefully? Ah! you blush: well, will you knit him another?"

"Pshaw, papa! Good-by; I am going to gather you a nosegay."

But Ellinor was seized with a sudden fit of industry, and, somehow or other, she grew fonder of knitting than ever.

The neighborhood was now tranquil and at peace; the nightly depredators that had infested the green valleys of Grassdale were heard of no more; it seemed a sudden incursion of fraud and crime, which was too unnatural to the character of the spot invaded to do more than to terrify and to disappear. The *truditur dies die*, the serene steps of one calm day chasing another, returned, and the past alarm was only remembered as a tempting subject of gossip to the villagers, and at the Hall a theme of eulogium on the courage of Eugene Aram.

"It is a lovely day," said Lester to his daughters as they sat at the window; "come, girls, get your bonnets, and let us take a walk into the village."

"And meet the postman," said Ellinor, archly.

"Yes," rejoined Madeline, in the same vein, but in a whisper that Lester might not hear; "for who knows but that we may have a letter from Walter?"

How prettily sounds such raillery on virgin lips! No, no; nothing on earth is so lovely as the confidence between two happy sisters who have no secrets but those of a guileless love to reveal!

As they strolled into the village they were met by Peter Dealtry, who was slowly riding home on a large ass, which carried himself and his panniers to the neighboring market in a more quiet and luxurious indolence of action than would the harsher motions of the equine species.

"A fine day, Peter; and what news at market?" said Lester.

"Corn high, hay dear, your honor," replied the clerk.

"Ah, I suppose so,—a good time to sell ours, Peter; we must see about it on Saturday. But, pray, have you heard anything from the corporal since his departure?"

"Not I, your honor, not I; though I think as he might have given us a line, if it was only to thank me for my care of his cat; but—

"'Them as comes to go to roam,
Thinks slight of they as stays at home.'"

"A notable distich, Peter; your own composition, I warrant."

"Mine! Lord love your honor, I has no genus, but I has memory; and when them 'ere beautiful lines of poetry like comes into my head, they stays there, and stays till they pops out at my tongue, like a bottle of ginger-beer. I do loves poetry, sir, 'specially the sacred."

"We know it, we know it."

"For there be summut in it," continued the clerk, "which smooths a man's heart like a clothes-brush, wipes away the dust and dirt, and sets all the nap right; and I thinks as how 't is what a clerk of the parish ought to study, your honor."

"Nothing better; you speak like an oracle."

"Now, sir, there be the corporal, honest man, what thinks himself mighty clever; but he has no soul for varse. Lord love ye, to see the faces he makes when I tells him a hymn or so,—'t is quite wicked, your honor· for that 's what the heathen did as you well know, sir.

"'And when I does discourse of things
Most holy to their tribe,
What does they do? They mocks at me,
And makes my heart a gibe.'

'T is not what *I* calls pretty, Miss Ellinor."

"Certainly not, Peter; I wonder, with your talents for verse, you never indulge in a little satire against such perverse taste."

"Satire! What 's that? Oh, I knows,—what they writes in elections. Why, miss, mayhap—" here Peter paused, and winked significantly. "But the corporal 's a passionate man, you knows; but I could so sting him. Aha! we 'll see, we 'll see. Do you know, your honor,"—here Peter altered his air to one of serious importance, as if about to impart a most sagacious conjecture,—"I thinks there be one reason why the corporal has not written to me."

"And what 's that, Peter?"

"'Cause, your honor, he 's ashamed of his writing; I fancy as how his spelling is no better than it should be. But mum 's the word. You sees, your honor, the corporal 's got a tarn for conversation-like; he be a mighty fine talker, sure*ly*, but he be shy o' the pen. 'T is not every man what talks biggest what 's the best scholard at bottom. Why, there 's the newspaper I saw in the market (for I always sees the newspaper once a week) says as how some of them great speakers in the parliament house are no better than ninnies when they gets upon paper; and that 's the corporal's case, I sispect. I suppose as how they can't spell all them 'ere long words they make use on. For my part, I thinks there be mortal desate [deceit] like in that 'ere public speaking, for I knows how far a loud voice and a bold face goes, even in buying a cow, your honor, and I 'm afraid the country 's greatly bubbled in that

'ere partiklar; for if a man can't write down clearly what he means for to say, I does not thinks as how he knows what he means when he goes for to speak!"

This speech — quite a moral exposition for Peter, and doubtless inspired by his visit to market; for what wisdom cannot come from intercourse? — our good publican delivered with especial solemnity, giving a huge thump on the sides of his ass as he concluded.

"Upon my word, Peter," said Lester, laughing, "you have grown quite a Solomon, and instead of a clerk, you ought to be a justice of the peace at the least; and, indeed, I must say that I think you shine more in the capacity of a lecturer than in that of a soldier."

"'T is not for a clerk of the parish to have too great a knack at the weapons of the flesh," said Peter, sanctimoniously, and turning aside to conceal a slight confusion at the unlucky reminiscence of his warlike exploits; "but lauk, sir, even as to that, why we has frightened all the robbers away. What would you have us do more?"

"Upon my word, Peter, you say right; and now, good day. Your wife's well, I hope? And Jacobina (is not that the cat's name?) in high health and favor?"

"Hem, hem! why, to be sure, the cat's a good cat; but she steals Goody Truman's cream as Goody sets for butter reg'larly every night."

"Oh! you must cure her of that," said Lester, smiling. "I hope that's the worst fault."

"Why, your gardener do say," replied Peter, reluctantly, "as how she goes arter the pheasants in Copse-hole."

"The deuce!" cried the squire; "that will never do. She must be shot, Peter, she must be shot. *My* pheasants, *my* best preserves, and poor Goody Truman's cream, too, — a perfect devil! Look to it, Peter; if I hear any complaints again, Jacobina is done for. What are you laughing at, Nell?"

"Well, go thy ways for a shrewd man and a clever man; it is not every one who could so suddenly have elicited my father's compassion for Goody Truman's cream."

"Pooh!" said the squire, "a pheasant's a serious thing, child; but you women don't understand matters."

They had now crossed through the village into the fields, and were slowly sauntering by

"Hedge-row elms on hillocks green,"

when, seated under a stunted pollard, they came suddenly on the ill-favored person of Dame Darkmans. She sat bent (with her elbows on her knees, and her hands supporting her chin), looking up to the clear autumnal sky; and as they approached, she did not stir, or testify by sign or glance that she even perceived them.

There is a certain kind-hearted sociability of temper that you see sometimes among country gentlemen, especially not of the highest rank, who knowing, and looked up to by, every one immediately around them, acquire the habit of accosting all they meet,—a habit as painful for them to break as it was painful for poor Rousseau to be asked "how he did" by an apple-woman. And the kind old squire could not pass even Goody Darkmans (coming thus abruptly upon her) without a salutation.

"All alone, dame, enjoying the fine weather? That's right. And how fares it with you?"

The old woman turned round her dark and bleared eyes, but without moving limb or posture.

"'T is wellnigh winter now; 't is not easy for poor folks to fare well at this time o' year. Where be we to get the fire-wood and the clothing and the dry bread—carse it!—and the drop o' stuff that's to keep out the cold? Ah! it's fine for you to ask how we does, and the days shortening and the air sharpening."

"Well, dame, shall I send to —— for a warm cloak for you?" said Madeline.

"Ho! thank ye, young lady, thank ye kindly, and I'll wear it at your widding; for they says you be going to git married to the larned man yander. Wish ye well, ma'am; wish ye well."

The old hag grinned as she uttered this benediction, that

sounded on her lips like the Lord's Prayer on a witch's,—which converts the devotion to a crime, and the prayer to a curse.

"Ye 're very winsome, young lady," she continued, eying Madeline's tall and rounded figure from head to foot, "yes, very; but I was bonny as you once, and if you lives,—mind that,—fair and happy as you stand now, you 'll be as withered and foul-faced and wretched as me. Ha! ha! I loves to look on young folk, and think o' that. But mayhap ye won't live to be old,—more 's the pity! For ye might be a widow, and childless, and a lone 'oman, as I be, if you were to see sixty. An' would n't that be nice? ha! ha! Much pleasure ye 'll have in the fine weather then, and in people's fine speeches, eh?"

"Come, dame," said Lester, with a cloud on his benign brow, "this talk is ungrateful to me and disrespectful to Miss Lester; it is not the way to—"

"Hout!" interrupted the old woman, "I begs pardon, sir, if I offended,—I begs pardon, young lady; 't is my way, poor old soul that I be. And you meant me kindly, and I would not be uncivil now you are a going to give me a bonny cloak. And what color shall it be?"

"Why, what color would you like best, dame,—red?"

"Red, no,—like a gypsy-quean, indeed! Besides, they all has red cloaks in the village yonder. No; a handsome dark gray, or a gay, cheersome black, an' then I 'll dance in mourning at your wedding, young lady,—and that 's what ye 'll like. But what ha' ye done with the merry bridegroom, ma'am? Gone away, I hear. Ah, ye 'll have a happy life on it, with a gentleman like him; I never seed him laugh once. Why does not he hire me as your sarvant: would not I be a favorite thin? I 'd stand on the thrishold and give ye good morrow every day. Oh! it does me a deal of good to say a blessing to them as be younger and gayer than me. Madge Darkmans' blessing! Och! what a thing to wish for!"

"Well, good day, mother," said Lester, moving on.

"Stay a bit, stay a bit, sir: has ye any commands, miss, yonder, at Master Aram's? His old 'oman 's a gossip of

mine, we were young togither, and the lads did not know which to like the best. So we often meets and talks of the old times. I be going up there now. Och ! I hope I shall be asked to the widding. And what a nice month to wid in! Novimber, Novimber, that 's the merry month for me! But 't is cold, bitter cold too. Well, good day, good day. Ay," continued the hag, as Lester and the sisters moved on, "ye all goes, and throws niver a look behind. Ye despises the poor in your hearts. But the poor will have their day. Och! an' I wish ye were dead, dead, dead, an' I dancing in my bonny black cloak about your graves; for a'n't all *mine* dead, cold, cold, rotting ? — and one kind and rich man might ha' saved them all! "

Thus mumbling, the wretched creature looked after the father and his daughters as they wound onward, till her dim eyes caught them no longer; and then, drawing her rags round her, she rose, and struck into the opposite path that led to Aram's house.

"I hope that hag will be no constant visitor at your future residence, Madeline," said the younger sister; "it would be like a blight on the air."

"And if we could remove her from the parish," said Lester, "it would be a happy day for the village. Yet, strange as it may seem, so great is her power over them all that there is never a marriage nor a christening in the village from which she is absent; they dread her spite and foul tongue enough to make them even ask humbly for her presence."

"And the hag seems to know that her bad qualities are a good policy, and obtain more respect than amiability would do," said Ellinor. "I think there is some design in all she utters."

"I don't know how it is, but the words and sight of that woman have struck a damp into my heart," said Madeline, musingly.

"It would be wonderful if they had not, child," said Lester, soothingly; and he changed the conversation to other topics.

As, concluding their walk, they re-entered the village, they encountered that most welcome of all visitants to a country

village,— the postman; a tall, thin pedestrian, famous for swiftness of foot, with a cheerful face, a swinging gait, and Lester's bag slung over his shoulder. Our little party quickened their pace: one letter,— for Madeline,— Aram's handwriting. Happy blush, bright smile! Ah! no meeting ever gives the delight that a letter can inspire in the short absences of a first love.

"And none for me!" said Lester, in a disappointed tone, and Ellinor's hand hung more heavily on his arm, and her step moved slower. "It is very strange in Walter; but I am really more angry than alarmed."

"Be sure," said Ellinor, after a pause, "that it is not his fault. Something may have happened to him. Good heavens! if he has been attacked again,— those fearful highwaymen!"

"Nay," said Lester, "the most probable supposition, after all, is that he will not write until his expectations are realized or destroyed. Natural enough, too; it is what I should have done if I had been in his place."

"Natural!" said Ellinor, who now attacked where she before defended,— "natural not to give us *one* line, to say he is well and safe! Natural! *I* could not have been so remiss!"

"Ay, child, you women are so fond of writing. 'T is not so with us, especially when we are moving about; it is always, 'Well, I must write to-morrow; well, I must write when this is settled; well, I must write when I arrive at such a place;' and, meanwhile, time slips on, till perhaps we get ashamed of writing at all. I heard a great man say once that 'Men must have something effeminate about them to be good correspondents;' and 'faith! I think it 's true enough on the whole."

"I wonder if Madeline thinks so?" said Ellinor, enviously glancing at her sister's absorption, as, lingering a little behind, she devoured the contents of her letter.

"He is coming home immediately, dear father,— perhaps he may be here to-morrow," cried Madeline, abruptly. "Think of that, Ellinor! Ah! and he writes in spirits!" and the poor girl clapped her hands delightedly, as the color danced joyously over her cheek and neck.

"I am glad to hear it," quoth Lester; "we shall have him at last beat even Ellinor in gayety!"

"That may easily be," sighed Ellinor to herself as she glided past them into the house and sought her own chamber.

CHAPTER V.

A REFLECTION NEW AND STRANGE.—THE STREETS OF LONDON.—A GREAT MAN'S LIBRARY.—A CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE STUDENT AND AN ACQUAINTANCE OF THE READER.—ITS RESULTS.

HERE 's a statesman!

. . . . . .

Rolla. Ask for thyself.
Lat. What more can concern me than this?

The Tragedy of Rolla.

IT was an evening in the declining autumn of 1758; some public ceremony had occurred during the day, and the crowd which had assembled was only now gradually lessening as the shadows darkened along the streets. Through this crowd, self-absorbed as usual,—with them, not one of them,—Eugene Aram slowly wound his uncompanioned way. What an incalculable field of dread and sombre contemplation is opened to every man who, with his heart disengaged from himself, and his eyes accustomed to the sharp observance of his tribe, walks through the streets of a great city! What a world of dark and troubled secrets in the breast of every one who hurries by you! Goethe has said somewhere that each of us, the best as the worst, hides within him something—some feeling, some remembrance—that, if known, would make you hate him. No doubt the saying is exaggerated: but still, what a gloomy and profound sublimity in the idea; what a new insight it gives into the hearts of the common herd; with what a strange interest it may inspire us for the humblest, the

tritest passenger that shoulders us in the great thoroughfare of life! One of the greatest pleasures in the world is to walk alone and at night, while they are yet crowded, through the long lamp-lit streets of this huge metropolis. There, even more than in the silence of woods and fields, seems to me the source of endless, various meditation.

"Crescit enim cum amplitudine rerum vis ingenii."[1]

There was that in Aram's person which irresistibly commanded attention. The earnest composure of his countenance, its thoughtful paleness, the long hair falling back, the peculiar and estranged air of his whole figure, accompanied as it was by a mildness of expression and that lofty abstraction which characterizes one who is a brooder over his own heart, a soothsayer to his own dreams,—all these arrested from time to time the second gaze of the passenger, and forced on him the impression, simple as was the dress, and unpretending as was the gait of the stranger, that in indulging that second gaze he was in all probability satisfying the curiosity which makes us love to fix our regard upon any remarkable man.

At length Aram turned from the more crowded streets, and in a short time paused before one of the most princely houses in London. It was surrounded by a spacious court-yard, and over the porch the arms of the owner, with the coronet and supporters, were raised in stone.

"Is Lord —— within?" asked Aram, of the bluff porter who appeared at the gate.

"My lord is at dinner," replied the porter, thinking the answer quite sufficient, and about to reclose the gate upon the unseasonable visitor.

"I am glad to find he is at home," rejoined Aram, gliding past the servant with an air of quiet and unconscious command, and passing the court-yard to the main building.

At the door of the house, to which you ascended by a flight of stone steps, the valet of the nobleman—the only nobleman introduced in our tale, and consequently the same whom we

[1] "For the power of the intellect is increased by the amplitude of the things that feed it."

have presented to our reader in the earlier part of this work, — happened to be lounging and enjoying the smoke of the evening air. High-bred, prudent, and sagacious, Lord —— knew well how often great men, especially in public life, obtain odium for the rudeness of their domestics; and all those, especially about himself, had been consequently tutored into the habits of universal courtesy and deference, to the lowest stranger as well as to the highest guest. And trifling as this may seem, it was an act of morality as well as of prudence. Few can guess what pain may be saved to poor and proud men of merit by a similar precaution. The valet therefore replied to the visitor's inquiry with great politeness,—he recollected Aram's name and repute; and as the earl, taking delight in the company of men of letters, was generally easy of access to all such, the great man's great man instantly conducted the student to the earl's library, and informing him that his lordship had not yet left the dining-room, where he was entertaining a large party, assured him that he should be apprised of Aram's visit the moment he did so.

Lord —— was still in office. Sundry boxes were scattered on the floor, papers, that seemed countless, lay strewed over the immense library table; but here and there were books of a more seductive character than those of business, in which the mark lately set, and the pencilled note still fresh, showed the fondness with which men of cultivated minds, though engaged in official pursuits, will turn, in the momentary intervals of more arid and toilsome life, to those lighter studies which perhaps they in reality the most enjoy.

One of these books, a volume of Shaftesbury, Aram carefully took up; it opened of its own accord at that most beautiful and profound passage, which contains perhaps the justest sarcasm to which that ingenious and graceful reasoner has given vent:—

"The very spirit of Faction, for the greatest part, seems to be no other than the abuse or irregularity of that social love and common affection which is natural to mankind, for the opposite of sociableness is selfishness; and of all characters, the thorough selfish one is the least forward in taking party. The men of this sort are, in this respect, true

men of moderation. They are secure of their temper, and possess themselves too well to be in danger of entering warmly into any cause, or engaging deeply with any side or faction."

On the margin of the page was the following note, in the handwriting of Lord ——:—

"Generosity hurries a man into party, — philosophy keeps him aloof from it; the Emperor Julian says, in his epistle to Themistius, 'If you should form only three or four philosophers, you would contribute more essentially to the happiness of mankind than many kings united.' Yet if all men were philosophers, I doubt whether, though more men would be virtuous, there would be so many instances of an extraordinary virtue. The violent passions produce dazzling irregularities."

The student was still engaged with this note when the earl entered the room. As the door through which he passed was behind Aram, and he trod with a soft step, he was not perceived by the scholar till he had reached him; and, looking over Aram's shoulder, the earl said: "You will dispute the truth of my remark, will you not? Profound calm is the element in which you would place all the virtues."

"Not *all*, my lord," answered Aram, rising, as the earl now shook him by the hand and expressed his delight at seeing the student again. Though the sagacious nobleman had no sooner heard the student's name than, in his own heart, he was convinced that Aram had sought him for the purpose of soliciting a renewal of the offers he had formerly refused, he resolved to leave his visitor to open the subject himself, and appeared courteously to consider the visit as a matter of course, made without any other object than the renewal of the mutual pleasure of intercourse.

"I am afraid, my lord," said Aram, "that you are engaged. My visit can be paid to-morrow if—"

"Indeed," said the earl, interrupting him, and drawing a chair to the table, "I have no engagements which should deprive me of the pleasure of your company. A few friends have indeed dined with me, but as they are now with Lady ——, I do not think they will greatly miss me. Besides, an occasional absence is readily forgiven in us happy men of

office,—we, who have the honor of exciting the envy of all England for being made magnificently wretched."

"I am glad you allow so much, my lord," said Aram, smiling; "*I* could not have said more. Ambition only makes a favorite to make an ingrate; she has lavished her honors on Lord ——, and hear how he speaks of her bounty!"

"Nay," said the earl, "I spoke wantonly, and stand corrected. I have no reason to complain of the course I have chosen. Ambition, like any other passion, gives us unhappy moments, but it gives us also an animated life. In its pursuit, the minor evils of the world are not felt; little crosses, little vexations, do not disturb us. Like men who walk in sleep, we are absorbed in one powerful dream, and do not even know the obstacles in our way, or the dangers that surround us,—in a word, we have *no private life*. All that is merely domestic, the anxiety and the loss which fret other men, which blight the happiness of other men, are not felt by us,—we are wholly public; so that if we lose much comfort, we escape much care."

The earl broke off for a moment; and then, turning the subject, inquired after the Lesters, and making some general and vague observations about that family, came purposely to a pause.

Aram broke it.

"My lord," said he, with a slight, but not ungraceful, embarrassment, "I fear that in the course of your political life you must have made one observation,—that he who promises to-day will be called upon to perform to-morrow. No man who has anything to bestow, can ever promise with impunity. Some time since, you tendered me offers that would have dazzled more ardent natures than mine, and which I might have advanced some claim to philosophy in refusing. I do not now come to ask a renewal of those offers. Public life and the haunts of men are as hateful as ever to my pursuits; but I come, frankly and candidly, to throw myself on that generosity which proffered to me then so large a bounty. Certain circumstances have taken from me the small pittance which supplied my wants. I require only the power to pursue my

quiet and obscure career of study,—your lordship can afford me that power. It is not against custom for the government to grant some small annuity to men of letters,—your lordship's interest could obtain me this favor. Let me add, however, that I can offer nothing in return. Party politics, sectarian interests, are forever dead to me; even my common studies are of small general utility to mankind. I am conscious of this,—would it were otherwise! Once I hoped it would be; but—" Aram here turned deadly pale, gasped for breath, mastered his emotion, and proceeded: "I have no great claim, then, to this bounty beyond that which all poor cultivators of the abstruse sciences can advance. It is well for a country that those sciences should be cultivated; they are not of a nature which is ever lucrative to the possessor, not of a nature that can often be left, like lighter literature, to the fair favor of the public. They call, perhaps, more than any species of intellectual culture, for the protection of a government; and though in me would be a poor selection, the principle would still be served, and the example furnish precedent for nobler instances hereafter. I have said all, my lord!"

Nothing perhaps more affects a man of some sympathy with those who cultivate letters than the pecuniary claims of one who can advance them with justice, and who advances them also with dignity. If the meanest, the most pitiable, the most heart-sickening object in the world is the man of letters sunk into the habitual beggar, practising the tricks, incurring the rebuke, glorying in the shame, of the mingled mendicant and swindler,—what, on the other hand, so touches, so subdues us as the first, and only, petition of one whose intellect dignifies our whole kind, and who prefers it with a certain haughtiness in his very modesty, because, in asking a favor to himself, he may be only asking the power to enlighten the world?

"Say no more, sir," said the earl, affected deeply, and gracefully giving way to the feeling; "the affair is settled. Consider it so. Name only the amount of the annuity you desire."

With some hesitation Aram named a sum so moderate, so trivial, that the minister, accustomed as he was to the claims

of younger sons and widowed dowagers; accustomed to the hungry cravings of petitioners without merit, who considered birth the only just title to the right of exactions from the public, — was literally startled by the contrast. "More than this," added Aram, "I do not require and would decline to accept. We have some right to claim existence from the administrators of the common stock, — none to claim affluence."

"Would to Heaven," said the earl, smiling, "that all claimants were like you! Pension-lists would not then call for indignation, and ministers would not blush to support the justice of the favors they conferred. But are you still firm in rejecting a more public career, with all its deserved emoluments and just honors? The offer I made you once, I renew with increased avidity now."

"'Despiciam dites,'" answered Aram; "and, thanks to you, I may add, 'despiciamque famem.'"[1]

CHAPTER VI.

THE THAMES AT NIGHT. — A THOUGHT. — THE STUDENT RESEEKS THE RUFFIAN. — A HUMAN FEELING EVEN IN THE WORST SOIL.

Clem. 'T is our last interview!
Stat. Pray Heaven it be! — *Clemanthes.*

On leaving Lord ——'s, Aram proceeded, with a lighter and more rapid step, towards a less courtly quarter of the metropolis.

He had found, on arriving in London, that in order to secure the annual sum promised to Houseman, it had been necessary to strip himself even of the small stipend he had hoped to retain. And hence his visit, and hence his petition, to Lord ——. He now bent his way to the spot in which Houseman

[1] "'Let me despise wealth;' and, thanks to you, I may add, 'and let me look down on famine.'"

had appointed their meeting. To the fastidious reader these details of pecuniary matters, so trivial in themselves, may be a little wearisome, and may seem a little undignified; but we are writing a romance of real life, and the reader must take what is homely with what may be more epic,—the pettiness and the wants of the daily world, with its loftier sorrows and its grander crimes. Besides, who knows how darkly just may be that moral which shows us a nature originally high, a soul once all athirst for truth, bowed (by what events?) to the manœuvres and the lies of the worldly hypocrite?

The night had now closed in, and its darkness was only relieved by the wan lamps that vistaed the streets, and a few dim stars that struggled through the reeking haze that curtained the great city. Aram had now gained one of the bridges "that arch the royal Thames;" and at no time dead to scenic attraction, he there paused for a moment, and looked along the dark river that rushed below.

O God! how many wild and stormy hearts have stilled themselves on that spot, for one dread instant of thought, of calculation, of resolve,—one instant, the last of life! Look at night along the course of that stately river, how gloriously it seems to mock the passions of them that dwell beside it! Unchanged, unchanging, all around it quick death and troubled life; itself smiling up to the gray stars, and singing from its deep heart as it bounds along. Beside it is the senate, proud of its solemn triflers; and there the cloistered tomb, in which, as the loftiest honor, some handful of the fiercest of the strugglers may gain forgetfulness and a grave. There is no moral to a great city like the river that washes its walls.

There was something in the view before him that suggested reflections similar to these to the strange and mysterious breast of the lingering student. A solemn dejection crept over him, a warning voice sounded on his ear, the fearful genius within him was aroused; and even in the moment when his triumph seemed complete and his safety secured, he felt it only as—

"The torrent's smoothness ere it dash below."

The mist obscured and saddened the few lights scattered on

either side the water, and a deep and gloomy quiet brooded round.

> "The very houses seemed asleep,
> And all that mighty heart was lying still."

Arousing himself from his short and sombre revery, Aram resumed his way; and threading some of the smaller streets on the opposite side of the water, arrived at last in the street in which he was to seek Houseman.

It was a narrow and dark lane, and seemed altogether of a suspicious and disreputable locality. One or two samples of the lowest description of alehouses broke the dark silence of the spot. From them streamed the only lights which assisted the single lamp that burned at the entrance of the alley, and bursts of drunken laughter and obscene merriment broke out every now and then from these wretched theatres of *Pleasure.* As Aram passed one of them, a crowd of the lowest order of ruffian and harlot issued noisily from the door and suddenly obstructed his way: through this vile press, reeking with the stamp and odor of the most repellant character of vice, was the lofty and cold student to force his path! The darkness, his quick step, his downcast head, favored his escape through the unhallowed throng, and he now stood opposite the door of a small and narrow house. A ponderous knocker adorned the door, which seemed of uncommon strength, being thickly studded with large nails. He knocked twice before his summons was answered, and then a voice from within cried, "Who 's there? What want you?"

"I seek one called Houseman."

No answer was returned. Some moments elapsed. Again the student knocked, and presently he heard the voice of Houseman himself call out,—

"Who 's there,—Joe the Cracksman?"

"Richard Houseman, it is I," answered Aram, in a deep tone, and suppressing the natural feelings of loathing and abhorrence.

Houseman uttered a quick exclamation; the door was hastily unbarred. All within was utterly dark, but Aram felt

with a thrill of repugnance the gripe of his strange acquaintance on his hand.

"Ha! it is you! Come in, come in! Let me lead you. Have a care; cling to the wall,—the right hand. Now then, stay. So, so [opening the door of a room, in which a single candle, wellnigh in its socket, broke on the previous darkness]; here we are, here we are! And how goes it, eh?"

Houseman, now bustling about, did the honors of his apartment with a sort of complacent hospitality. He drew two rough wooden chairs, that in some late merriment seemed to have been upset, and lay, cumbering the unwashed and carpetless floor, in a position exactly contrary to that destined them by their maker,—he drew these chairs near a table strewed with drinking horns, half-emptied bottles, and a pack of cards. Dingy caricatures of the large coarse fashion of the day decorated the walls; and carelessly thrown on another table lay a pair of huge horse-pistols, an immense shovel-hat, a false mustache, a rouge-pot, and a riding-whip. All this the student comprehended with a rapid glance; his lip quivered for a moment,—whether with shame or scorn of himself,—and then, throwing himself on the chair Houseman had set for him, he said,—

"I have come to discharge my part of our agreement."

"You are most welcome," replied Houseman, with that tone of coarse, yet flippant jocularity which afforded to the mien and manner of Aram a still stronger contrast than his more unrelieved brutality.

"There," said Aram, giving him a paper, "there you will perceive that the sum mentioned is secured to you the moment you quit this country. When shall that be? Let me entreat haste."

"Your prayer shall be granted. Before daybreak to-morrow I will be on the road."

Aram's face brightened.

"There is my hand upon it," said Houseman, earnestly. "You may now rest assured that you are free of me for life. Go home, marry, enjoy your existence, as I have done Within four days, if the wind set fair, I am in France."

"My business is done; I will believe you," said Aram, frankly, and rising.

"You may," answered Houseman. "Stay — I will light you to the door. Devil and death — how the d—d candle flickers!"

Across the gloomy passage as the candle now flared, and now was dulled, by quick fits and starts, Houseman, after this brief conference, re-conducted the student. And as Aram turned from the door, he flung his arms wildly aloft, and exclaimed, in the voice of one from whose heart a load is lifted, "Now, now, for Madeline! I breathe freely at last!"

Meanwhile Houseman turned musingly back and regained his room, muttering,—

"Yes, yes, *my* business here is also done! Competence and safety abroad. After all, what a bugbear is this conscience! Fourteen years have rolled away, and lo, nothing discovered, nothing known! And easy circumstances — the very consequence of the deed — wait the remainder of my days. My child, too, my Jane, shall not want, — shall not be a beggar nor a harlot."

So musing, Houseman threw himself contentedly on the chair, and the last flicker of the expiring light, as it played upward on his rugged countenance, rested on one of those self-hugging smiles with which a sanguine man contemplates a satisfactory future.

He had not been long alone before the door opened and a woman with a light in her hand appeared. She was evidently intoxicated, and approached Houseman with a reeling and unsteady step.

"How now, Bess? Drunk, as usual! Get to bed, you she shark, go!"

"Tush, man, tush! don't talk to your betters," said the woman, sinking into a chair; and her situation, disgusting as it was, could not conceal the striking, though somewhat coarse, beauty of her face and person.

Even Houseman (his heart being opened, as it were, by the cheering prospects of which his soliloquy had indulged the contemplation) was sensible of the effect of the mere physical

attraction; and drawing his chair closer to her, he said, in a tone less harsh than usual,—

"Come, Bess, come, you must correct that d—d habit of yours; perhaps I may make a lady of you after all. What if I were to let you take a trip with me to France, old girl, eh, and let you set off that handsome face — for you are devilish handsome, and that 's the truth of it — with some of the French gewgaws you women love? What if I were? Would you be a good girl, eh?"

"I think I would, Dick, I think I would," replied the woman, showing a set of teeth as white as ivory, with pleasure partly at the flattery, partly at the proposition. "You are a good fellow, Dick, that you are."

"Humph!" said Houseman, whose hard, shrewd mind was not easily cajoled; "but what 's that paper in your bosom, Bess? A love-letter, I 'll swear."

"'T is to you, then,— came to you this morning; only somehow or other I forgot to give it you till now!"

"Ha! a letter to me!" said Houseman, seizing the epistle in question. "Hem! the Knaresborough postmark,— my mother-in-law's crabbed hand, too! What can the old crone want?"

He opened the letter, and hastily scanning its contents, started up.

"Mercy, mercy!" cried he, "my child is ill,— dying. I may never see her again,— my only child; the only thing that loves me, that does not loathe me as a villain!"

"Heyday, Dickey!" said the woman, clinging to him, "don't take on so! Who so fond of you as me? What 's a brat like that?"

"Curse on you, hag!" exclaimed Houseman, dashing her to the ground with a rude brutality,— "*you* love me! Pah! My child, my little Jane, my pretty Jane, my merry Jane, my innocent Jane,— I will seek her instantly, instantly! What 's money, what 's ease, if, if —"

And the father, wretch, ruffian as he was, stung to the core of that last redeeming feeling of his dissolute nature, struck his breast with his clenched hand and rushed from the room, from the house.

CHAPTER VII.

MADELINE, HER HOPES.— A MILD AUTUMN CHARACTERIZED.— A LANDSCAPE.— A RETURN.

> 'T is late and cold, — stir up the fire;
> Sit close, and draw the table nigher;
> Be merry and drink wine that 's old, —
> A hearty medicine 'gainst a cold.
> Welcome, welcome shall fly round!
> BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER: *Song in the "Lover's Progress."*

As when the great poet,—

> "Escaped the Stygian pool, though long detained
> In that obscure sojourn; while in his flight,
> Through utter and through middle darkness borne,
> He sang of chaos and eternal night,"—

as when, revisiting the "holy light, offspring of heaven first-born," the sense of freshness and glory breaks upon him and kindles into the solemn joyfulness of adjuring song, so rises the mind from the contemplation of the gloom and guilt of life, "the utter and the middle darkness," to some pure and bright redemption of our nature,— some creature of "the starry threshold," "the regions mild of calm and serene air." Never was a nature more beautiful and soft than that of Madeline Lester; never a nature more inclined to live "above the smoke and stir of this dim spot which men call earth," to commune with its own high and chaste creations of thought, to make a world out of the emotions which *this* world knows not,— a paradise which sin and suspicion and fear had never yet invaded, where God might recognize no evil, and angels forbode no change.

Aram's return was now daily, nay, even hourly, expected. Nothing disturbed the soft, though thoughtful, serenity with which his betrothed relied upon the future. Aram's letters

had been more deeply impressed with the evidence of love than even his spoken vows; those letters had diffused not so much an agitated joy as a full and mellow light of happiness over her heart. Everything, even Nature, seemed inclined to smile with approbation on her hopes. The autumn had never, in the memory of man, worn so lovely a garment; the balmy and freshening warmth which sometimes characterizes that period of the year was not broken, as yet, by the chilling winds or the sullen mists which speak to us so mournfully of the change that is creeping over the beautiful world. The summer visitants among the feathered tribe yet lingered in flocks, showing no intention of departure, and their song — but above all, the song of the skylark, which to the old English poet was what the nightingale is to the Eastern — seemed even to grow more cheerful as the sun shortened his daily task; the very mulberry-tree and the rich boughs of the horse-chestnut retained something of their verdure; and the thousand glories of the woodland around Grassdale were still checkered with the golden hues that herald, but beautify, decay. Still no news had been received of Walter; and this was the only source of anxiety that troubled the domestic happiness of the manor-house. But the squire continued to remember that in youth he himself had been but a negligent correspondent; and the anxiety he felt had lately assumed rather the character of anger at Walter's forgetfulness than of fear for his safety. There were moments when Ellinor silently mourned and pined; but she loved her sister not less even than her cousin, and in the prospect of Madeline's happiness did not too often question the future respecting her own.

One evening the sisters were sitting at their work by the window of the little parlor, and talking over various matters, of which the Great World, strange as it may seem, never made a part.

They conversed in a low tone; for Lester sat by the hearth, in which a wood-fire had been just kindled, and appeared to have fallen into an afternoon slumber. The sun was sinking to repose, and the whole landscape lay before them bathed in light, till a cloud passing overhead darkened the heavens just

immediately above them, and one of those beautiful sun-showers, that rather characterize the spring than autumn, began to fall. The rain was rather sharp, and descended with a pleasant and freshening noise through the boughs, all shining in the sunlight; it did not, however, last long, and presently there sprang up the glorious rainbow, and the voices of the birds, which a minute before were mute, burst into a general chorus,—the last hymn of the declining day. The sparkling drops fell fast and gratefully from the trees, and over the whole scene there breathed an inexpressible sense of gladness,—

"The odor and the harmony of eve."

"How beautiful!" said Ellinor, pausing from her work. "Ah! see the squirrel,—is that our pet one?—he is coming close to the window, poor fellow! Stay; I will get him some bread."

"Hush!" said Madeline, half rising, and turning quite pale; "do you hear a step without?"

"Only the dripping of the boughs," answered Ellinor.

"No, no,—it is he! it is he!" cried Madeline, the blood rushing back vividly to her cheeks. "I know his step!"

And—yes, winding round the house till he stood opposite the window, the sisters now beheld Eugene Aram. The diamond rain glittered on the locks of his long hair; his cheeks were flushed by exercise, or more probably the joy of return; a smile, in which there was no shade or sadness, played over his features, which caught also a fictitious semblance of gladness from the rays of the setting sun which fell full upon them.

"My Madeline! my love! my Madeline!" broke from his lips.

"You are returned,—thank God! thank God! safe! Well?"

"And happy!" added Aram, with a deep meaning in the tone of his voice.

"Heyday, heyday!" cried the squire, starting up, "what's this? Bless me, Eugene!—wet through, too, seemingly! Nell, run and open the door,—more wood on the fire; the

pheasants for supper. And stay, girl, stay,—there 's the key of the cellar: the twenty-one port,—you know it. Ah! ah! God willing, Eugene Aram shall not complain of his welcome back to Grassdale!"

CHAPTER VIII.

AFFECTION: ITS GODLIKE NATURE.—THE CONVERSATION BETWEEN ARAM AND MADELINE.—THE FATALIST FORGETS FATE.

> Hope is a lover's staff; walk hence with that,
> And manage it against despairing thoughts.
>
> *Two Gentlemen of Verona.*

If there be anything thoroughly lovely in the human heart it is affection. All that makes hope elevated or fear generous belongs to the capacity of loving. For my own part, I do not wonder, in looking over the thousand creeds and sects of men, that so many religionists have traced their theology, that so many moralists have wrought their system, from love. The errors thus originated have something in them that charms us, even while we smile at the theology or while we neglect the system. What a beautiful fabric would be human nature, what a divine guide would be human reason, if love were indeed the stratum of the one and the inspiration of the other! We are told of a picture by a great painter of old, in which an infant is represented sucking a mother wounded to the death, who, even in that agony, strives to prevent the child from injuring itself by imbibing the blood mingled with the milk.[1] How many emotions, that might have made us permanently wiser and better, have we lost in losing that picture!

Certainly love assumes a more touching and earnest semblance when we find it in some retired and sequestered hollow of the world. When it is not mixed up with the daily frivol-

[1] "Intelligitur sentire mater et timere, ne e mortuo lacte sanguinem lambat."

ities and petty emotions of which a life passed in cities is so necessarily composed, we cannot but believe it a deeper and a more absorbing passion: perhaps we are not always right in the belief.

Had one of that order of angels to whom a knowledge of the future, or the seraphic penetration into the hidden heart of man, is forbidden, stayed his wings over the lovely valley in which the main scene of our history has been cast, no spectacle might have seemed to him more appropriate to that pastoral spot, or more elevated in the character of its tenderness above the fierce and short-lived passions of the ordinary world, than the love that existed between Madeline and her betrothed. Their natures seemed so suited to each other,—the solemn and *undiurnal* mood of the one was reflected back in hues so gentle, and yet so faithful, from the purer, but scarce less thoughtful, character of the other. Their sympathies ran through the same channel, and mingled in a common fount; and whatever was dark and troubled in the breast of Aram was now suffered not to appear. Since his return his mood was brighter and more tranquil, and he seemed better fitted to appreciate and respond to the peculiar tenderness of Madeline's affection. There are some stars which, viewed by the naked eye, seem one, but in reality are two separate orbs, revolving round each other, and drinking, each from each, a separate yet united existence: such stars seemed a type of them.

Had anything been wanting to complete Madeline's happiness, the change in Aram supplied the want. The sudden starts, the abrupt changes of mood and countenance, that had formerly characterized him, were now scarcely, if ever, visible. He seemed to have resigned himself with confidence to the prospects of the future, and to have forsworn the haggard recollections of the past; he moved and looked and smiled like other men; he was alive to the little circumstances around him, and no longer absorbed in the contemplation of a separate and strange existence within himself. Some scattered fragments of his poetry bear the date of this time: they are chiefly addressed to Madeline; and amidst the vows of love,

a spirit, sometimes of a wild and bursting, sometimes of a profound and collected, happiness are visible. There is great beauty in many of these fragments, and they bear a stronger evidence of *heart*, they breathe more of nature and truth, than the poetry that belongs of right to that time.

And thus day rolled on day, till it was now the eve before their bridals. Aram had deemed it prudent to tell Lester that he had sold his annuity, and that he had applied to the earl for the pension which we have seen he had been promised. As to his supposed relation, the illness he had created he suffered now to cease; and indeed the approaching ceremony gave him a graceful excuse for turning the conversation away from any topics that did not relate to Madeline or to that event. It was the eve before their marriage: Aram and Madeline were walking along the valley that led to the house of the former.

"How fortunate it is," said Madeline, "that our future residence will be so near my father's! I cannot tell you with what delight he looks forward to the pleasant circle we shall make. Indeed, I think he would scarcely have consented to our wedding, if it had separated us from him."

Aram stopped, and plucked a flower.

"Ah! indeed, indeed, Madeline. Yet in the course of the various changes of life, how more than probable it is that we shall be divided from him,—that we shall leave this spot."

"It is possible, certainly; but not probable, is it, Eugene?"

"Would it grieve thee, irremediably, dearest, were it so?" rejoined Aram, evasively.

"Irremediably! What could grieve me irremediably that did not happen to you?"

"Should, then, circumstances occur to induce us to leave this part of the country for one yet more remote, you could submit cheerfully to the change?"

"I should weep for my father, I should weep for Ellinor; but—"

"But what?"

"I should comfort myself in thinking that you would then be yet more to me than ever!"

"Dearest!"

"But why do you speak thus,—only to try me? Ah! that is needless."

"No, my Madeline, I have no doubt of your affection. When you loved such as me, I knew at once how blind, how devoted must be that love. You were not won through the usual avenues to a woman's heart; neither wit nor gayety, nor youth nor beauty, did you behold in me. Whatever attracted you towards me, that which must have been sufficiently powerful to make you overlook these ordinary allurements, will be also sufficiently enduring to resist all ordinary changes. But listen, Madeline. Do not yet ask me wherefore, but I fear that a certain fatality will constrain us to leave this spot very shortly after our wedding."

"How disappointed my poor father will be!" said Madeline, sighing.

"Do not on any account mention this conversation to him or to Ellinor: 'Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof.'"

Madeline wondered, but said no more. There was a pause for some minutes.

"Do you remember," observed Madeline, "that it was about here we met that strange man whom you had formerly known?"

"Ha! was it? Here, was it?"

"What has become of him?"

"He is abroad, I hope," said Aram, calmly. "Yes, let me think: by this time he *must* be in France. Dearest, let us rest here on this dry mossy bank for a little while;" and Aram drew his arm round her waist, and, his countenance brightening as if with some thought of increasing joy, he poured out anew those protestations of love, and those anticipations of the future, which befitted the eve of a morrow so full of auspicious promise.

The heaven of their fate seemed calm and glowing, and Aram did not dream that the one small cloud of fear which was set within it, and which he alone beheld afar, and unprophetic of the storm, was charged with the thunderbolt of a doom he had protracted, not escaped.

CHAPTER IX.

WALTER AND THE CORPORAL ON THE ROAD.—THE EVENING SETS IN.—THE GYPSY TENTS.—ADVENTURE WITH THE HORSEMAN.—THE CORPORAL DISCOMFITED, AND THE ARRIVAL AT KNARESBOROUGH.

> LONG had he wandered, when from far he sees
> A ruddy flame that gleamed betwixt the trees.
> . . . Sir Gawaine prays him tell
> Where lies the road to princely Carduel.
>
> *The Knight of the Sword.*

"WELL, Bunting, we are not far from our night's resting-place," said Walter, pointing to a milestone on the road.

"The poor beast will be glad when we gets there, your honor," answered the corporal, wiping his brows.

"Which beast, Bunting?"

"Augh! now your honor's severe! I am glad to see you so merry."

Walter sighed heavily; there was no mirth at his heart at that moment.

"Pray, sir," said the corporal, after a pause, "if not too bold, has your honor heard how they be doing at Grassdale?"

"No, Bunting; I have not held any correspondence with my uncle since our departure. Once I wrote to him on setting off to Yorkshire, but I could give him no direction to write to me again. The fact is, that I have been so sanguine in this search, and from day to day I have been so led on in tracing a clew, which I fear is now broken, that I have constantly put off writing till I could communicate that certain intelligence which I flattered myself I should be able ere this to procure. However, if we are unsuccessful at Knaresborough, I shall write from that place a detailed account of our proceedings."

"And I hopes you will say as how I have given your honor satisfaction."

"Depend upon that."

"Thank you, sir, thank you humbly; I would not like the squire to think I 'm ungrateful, augh! And mayhap I may have more cause to be grateful by and by, whenever the squire, God bless him! in consideration of your honor's good offices, should let me have the bit cottage rent free."

"A man of the world, Bunting, a man of the world!"

"Your honor 's mighty obleeging," said the corporal, putting his hand to his hat. "I wonders," renewed he, after a short pause, "I wonders how poor neighbor Dealtry is; he was a sufferer last year. I should like to know how Peter be getting on,— 't is a good creature."

Somewhat surprised at this sudden sympathy on the part of the corporal, for it was seldom that Bunting expressed kindness for any one, Walter replied,—

"When I write, Bunting, I will not fail to inquire how Peter Dealtry is; does your kind heart suggest any other message to him ?"

"Only to ask arter Jacobina, poor thing,— she might get herself into trouble if little Peter fell sick and neglected her like, augh! And I hopes as how Peter airs the bit cottage now and then. But the squire, God bless him! will see to that and the 'tato-garden, I 'm sure."

"You may rely on that, Bunting," said Walter, sinking into a revery, from which he was shortly roused by the corporal.

"I 'spose Miss Madeline be married afore now, your honor ? Well, pray Heaven she be happy with that 'ere larned man! "

Walter's heart beat faster for a moment at this sudden remark; but he was pleased to find that the time when the thought of Madeline's marriage was accompanied with painful emotion was entirely gone by. The reflection, however, induced a new train of idea, and without replying to the corporal, he sank into a deeper meditation than before.

The shrewd Bunting saw that it was not a favorable moment for renewing the conversation; he therefore suffered his horse to fall back, and taking a quid from his tobacco-box, was soon

as well entertained as his master. In this manner they rode on for about a couple of miles, the evening growing darker as they proceeded, when a green opening in the road brought them within view of a gypsy's encampment. The scene was so sudden and picturesque that it aroused the young traveller from his revery; and as his tired horse walked slowly on, the bridle about its neck, he looked with an earnest eye on the vagrant settlement beside his path. The moon had just risen above a dark copse in the rear, and cast a broad, deep shadow along the green, without lessening the vivid effect of the fires which glowed and sparkled in the darker recess of the waste land as the gloomy forms of the Egyptians were seen dimly cowering round the blaze. A scene of this sort is perhaps one of the most striking that the green lanes of old England afford; to me it has always an irresistible attraction, partly from its own claims, partly from those of association. When I was a mere boy, and bent on a solitary excursion over parts of England and Scotland, I saw something of that wild people,—though not perhaps so much as the ingenious George Hanger, to whose memoirs the reader may be referred for some rather amusing pages on gypsy life. As Walter was still eying the encampment, he in return had not escaped the glance of an old crone, who came running hastily up to him, and begged permission to tell his fortune and to have her hand crossed with silver.

Very few men under thirty ever sincerely refuse an offer of this sort. Nobody believes in these predictions, yet every one likes hearing them; and Walter, after faintly refusing the proposal twice, consented the third time, and drawing up his horse, submitted his hand to the old lady. In the mean while one of the younger urchins who had accompanied her had run to the encampment for a light, and now stood behind the old woman's shoulder, rearing on high a pine brand, which cast over the little group a red and weird-like glow.

The reader must not imagine we are now about to call his credulity in aid to eke out any interest he may feel in our story; the old crone was but a vulgar gypsy, and she predicted to Walter the same fortune she always predicted to those

who paid a shilling for the prophecy,—an heiress with blue eyes, seven children, troubles about the epoch of forty-three, happily soon over, and a healthy old age, with an easy death. Though Walter was not impressed with any reverential awe for these vaticinations, he yet could not refrain from inquiring whether the journey on which he was at present bent was likely to prove successful in its object.

"'T is an ill night," said the old woman, lifting up her wild face and elfin locks with a mysterious air,—"'t is an ill night for them as seeks and for them as asks. *He 's* about—"

"He,—who?"

"No matter! You may be successful, young sir, yet wish you had not been so. The moon thus, and the wind there, promise that you will get your desires, and find them crosses."

The corporal had listened very attentively to these predictions, and was now about to thrust forth his own hand to the soothsayer, when from a cross road to the right came the sound of hoofs, and presently a horseman at full trot pulled up beside them.

"Hark ye, old she-devil,—or you, sirs,—is this the road to Knaresborough?"

The gypsy drew back, and gazed on the countenance of the rider, on which the red glare of the pine-brand shone full.

"To Knaresborough, Richard the dare-devil? Ay, and what does the ramping bird want in the old nest? Welcome back to Yorkshire, Richard, my ben cove!"

"Ha!" said the rider, shading his eyes with his hand as he returned the gaze of the gypsy, "is it you, Bess Airlie? Your welcome is like the owl's, and reads the wrong way. But I must not stop. This takes to Knaresborough, then?"

"Straight as a dying man's curse to hell," replied the crone, in that metaphorical style in which all her tribe love to speak, and of which their proper language is indeed almost wholly composed.

The horseman answered not, but spurred on.

"Who is that?" asked Walter, earnestly, as the old woman stretched her tawny neck after the rider.

"An old friend, sir," replied the Egyptian, dryly. "I have

not seen him these fourteen years; but it is not Bess Airlie who is apt to forgit friend or foe. Well, sir, shall I tell your honor's good luck?" (here she turned to the corporal, who sat erect on his saddle, with his hand on his holster) — "the color of the lady's hair and — "

"Hold your tongue, you limb of Satan!" interrupted the corporal, fiercely, as if his whole tide of thought, so lately favorable to the soothsayer, had undergone a deadly reversion. "Please your honor, it 's getting late; we had better be jogging!"

"You are right," said Walter, spurring his jaded horse; and, nodding his adieu to the gypsy, he was soon out of sight of the encampment.

"Sir," said the corporal, joining his master, "that is a man as I have seed afore; I knowed his ugly face again in a crack, — 't is the man what came to Grassdale arter Mr. Aram, and we saw arterwards the night we chanced on Sir Peter Thingumebob."

"Bunting," said Walter, in a low voice, "*I* too have been trying to recall the face of that man, and I too am persuaded I have seen it before. A fearful suspicion, amounting almost to conviction, creeps over me that the hour in which I last saw it was one when my life was in peril. In a word, I do believe that I beheld that face bending over me on the night when I lay under the hedge and so nearly escaped murder. If I am right it was, however, the mildest of the ruffians,— the one who counselled his comrades against despatching me."

The corporal shuddered.

"Pray, sir," said he, after a moment's pause, "do see if your pistols are primed,— so, so. 'T is not out o' nature that the man may have some 'complices hereabout, and may think to waylay us. The old gypsy, too, what a face she had! Depend on it, they are two of a trade, augh! bother! whaugh!"

And the corporal grunted his most significant grunt.

"It is not at all unlikely, Bunting; and as we are now not far from Knaresborough, it will be prudent to ride on as fast as our horses will allow us. Keep up alongside."

"Certainly, I 'll purtect your honor," said the corporal,

getting on that side where, the hedge being thinnest, an ambush was less likely to be laid. "I care more for your honor's safety than my own, or what a brute I should be, augh!"

The master and man trotted on for some little distance, when they perceived a dark object moving along by the grass on the side of the road. The corporal's hair bristled; he uttered an oath, which he mistook for a prayer. Walter felt his breath grow a little thick as he watched the motions of the object so imperfectly beheld; presently, however, it grew into a man on horseback, trotting very slowly along the grass; and as they now neared him, they recognized the rider they had just seen, whom they might have imagined, from the pace at which he left them before, to have been considerably ahead of them.

The horseman turned round as he saw them.

"Pray, gentlemen," said he, in a tone of great and evident anxiety, "how far is it to Knaresborough?"

"Don't answer him, your honor," whispered the corporal.

"Probably," replied Walter, unheeding this advice, "you know this road better than we do. It cannot, however, be above three or four miles hence."

"Thank you, sir,—it is long since I have been in these parts. I used to know the country; but they have made new roads and strange enclosures, and I now scarcely recognize anything familiar. Curse on this brute! curse on it, I say!" repeated the horseman through his ground teeth, in a tone of angry vehemence. "I never wanted to ride so quick before, and the beast has fallen as lame as a tree. This comes of trying to go faster than other folks. Sir, are you a father?"

This abrupt question, which was uttered in a sharp, strained voice, a little startled Walter. He replied shortly in the negative, and was about to spur onward, when the horseman continued,—and there was something in his voice and manner that compelled attention,—

"And I am in doubt whether I have a child or not. By G—! it is a bitter, gnawing state of mind. I may reach Knaresborough to find my only daughter dead, sir, dead!"

Despite Walter's suspicions of the speaker, he could not but

feel a thrill of sympathy at the visible distress with which these words were said.

"I hope not," said he, involuntarily.

"Thank you, sir," replied the horseman, trying ineffectually to spur on his steed, which almost came down at the effort to proceed. "I have ridden thirty miles across the country at full speed, for they had no post-horses at the d—d place where I hired this brute. This was the only creature I could get for love or money; and now the devil only knows how important every moment may be. While I speak, my child may breathe her last!" And the man brought his clenched fist on the shoulder of his horse in mingled spite and rage.

"All sham, your honor," whispered the corporal.

"Sir," cried the horseman, now raising his voice, "I need not have asked if you had been a father,—if you had, you would have had compassion on me ere this; you would have lent me your own horse."

"The impudent rogue!" muttered the corporal.

"Sir," replied Walter, "it is not to the tale of every stranger that a man gives belief."

"Belief! Ah, well, well! 't is no matter," said the horseman, sullenly. "There was a time, man, when I would have forced what I now solicit; but my heart 's gone. Ride on, sir, ride on, and the curse of—"

"If," interrupted Walter, irresolutely, "if I could believe your statement— But, no. Mark me, sir, I have reasons, fearful reasons, for imagining that you mean this but as a snare!"

"Ha!" said the horseman, deliberately, "have we met before?"

"I believe so."

"And you have had cause to complain of me? It may be, it may be; but were the grave before me, and if one lie would smite me into it, I solemnly swear that I now utter but the naked truth."

"It would be folly to trust him, Bunting?" said Walter, turning round to his attendant.

"Folly, sheer madness—bother!"

"If you are the man I take you for," said Walter, "you once raised your voice against the murder, though you assisted in the robbery, of a traveller; that traveller was myself. I will remember the mercy,— I will forget the outrage; and I will not believe that you have devised this tale as a snare. Take my horse, sir; I will trust you."

Houseman, for it was he, flung himself instantly from his saddle. "I don't ask God to bless you: a blessing in my mouth would be worse than a curse. But you will not repent this; you will not repent it!"

Houseman said these few words with a palpable emotion; and it was more striking on account of the evident coarseness and hardened brutality of his nature. In a moment more he had mounted Walter's horse; and turning ere he sped on, inquired at what place at Knaresborough the horse should be sent. Walter directed him to the principal inn; and Houseman, waving his hand and striking his spurs into the animal, wearied as it was, shot out of sight in a moment.

"Well, if ever I seed the like!" quoth the corporal. "Lira, lira, la, la, la! lira, lara, la, la, la! augh! waugh! bother!"

"So my good-nature does not please you, Bunting?"

"Oh, sir, it does not sinnify,— we shall have our throats cut, that's all!"

"What, you don't believe the story?"

"I? Bless your honor, *I* am no fool."

"Bunting!"

"Sir."

"You forget yourself."

"Augh!"

"So you don't think I should have lent the horse?"

"Sartinly not."

"On occasions like these, every man ought to take care of himself? Prudence before generosity?"

"Of a sartainty, sir!"

"Dismount, then; I want my horse. You may shift with the lame one."

"Augh, sir, baugh!"

"Rascal, dismount, I say!" said Walter, angrily; for the

corporal was one of those men who aim at governing their masters; and his selfishness now irritated Walter as much as his impertinent tone of superior wisdom.

The corporal hesitated. He thought an ambuscade by the road of certain occurrence; and he was weighing the danger of riding a lame horse against his master's displeasure. Walter, perceiving he demurred, was seized with so violent a resentment that he dashed up to the corporal, and grasping him by the collar, swung him, heavy as he was,—being wholly unprepared for such force,—to the ground.

Without deigning to look at his condition, Walter mounted the sound horse, and throwing the bridle of the lame one over a bough, left the corporal to follow at his leisure.

There is not, perhaps, a more sore state of mind than that which we experience when we have committed an act we meant to be generous, and fear to be foolish.

"Certainly," said Walter, soliloquizing, "certainly the man is a rascal; yet he was evidently sincere in his emotion. Certainly he was one of the men who robbed me; yet if so, he was also the one who interceded for my life. If I should now have given strength to a villain; if I should have assisted him to an outrage against myself! What more probable? Yet, on the other hand, if his story be true, if his child be dying, and if, through my means, he obtain a last interview with her! Well, well, let me hope so!"

Here he was joined by the corporal, who, angry as he was, judged it prudent to smother his rage for another opportunity, and by favoring his master with his company, to procure himself an ally immediately at hand, should his suspicions prove true. But for once his knowledge of the world deceived him; no sign of living creature broke the loneliness of the way. By and by the lights of the town gleamed upon them; and on reaching the inn, Walter found his horse had been already sent there, and, covered with dust and foam, was submitting itself to the tutelary hands of the hostler.

CHAPTER X.

WALTER'S REFLECTIONS.— MINE HOST.— A GENTLE CHARACTER AND A GREEN OLD AGE.— THE GARDEN, AND THAT WHICH IT TEACHETH.— A DIALOGUE WHEREIN NEW HINTS TOWARDS THE WISHED-FOR DISCOVERY ARE SUGGESTED.— THE CURATE. — A VISIT TO A SPOT OF DEEP INTEREST TO THE ADVENTURER.

> I MADE a posy while the day ran by;
> Here will I smell my remnant out, and tie
> My life within this band. — GEORGE HERBERT.

> The time approaches
> That will with due precision make us know
> What —
>
> *Macbeth.*

THE next morning Walter rose early; and descending into the court-yard of the inn, he there met with the landlord, who — a hoe in his hand — was just about to enter a little gate that led into the garden. He held the gate open for Walter.

"It is a fine morning, sir: would you like to look into the garden?" said mine host, with an inviting smile.

Walter accepted the offer, and found himself in a large and well-stocked garden, laid out with much neatness and some taste. The landlord halted by a parterre which required his attention, and Walter walked on in solitary reflection.

The morning was serene and clear; but the frost mingled the freshness with an "eager and nipping air," and Walter unconsciously quickened his step as he passed to and fro the straight walk that bisected the garden, with his eyes on the ground and his hat over his brows.

Now then he had reached the place where the last trace of his father seemed to have vanished,— in how wayward and strange a manner! If no further clew could be here discovered by the inquiry he purposed, at this spot would terminate

his researches and his hopes. But the young heart of the traveller was buoyed up with expectation. Looking back to the events of the last few weeks, he thought he recognized the finger of Destiny guiding him from step to step, and now resting on the scene to which it had brought his feet. How singularly complete had been the train of circumstance which, linking things seemingly most trifling, most dissimilar, had lengthened into one continuous chain of evidence,—the trivial incident that led him to the saddler's shop; the accident that brought the whip that had been his father's to his eye; the account from Courtland, which had conducted him to this remote part of the country; and now the narrative of Elmore, leading him to the spot at which all inquiry seemed as yet to pause! Had he been led hither only to hear repeated that strange tale of sudden and wanton disappearance, —to find an abrupt wall, a blank and impenetrable barrier to a course hitherto so continuously guided on? Had he been the sport of Fate, and not its instrument? No; he was filled with a serious and profound conviction that a discovery, which he of all men was best entitled by the unalienable claims of blood and birth to achieve, was reserved for him, and that this grand dream of childhood was now about to be embodied and attained. He could not but be sensible, too, that as he had proceeded on his high enterprise, his character had acquired a weight and a thoughtful seriousness which was more fitted to the nature of that enterprise than akin to his earlier temper. This consciousness swelled his bosom with a profound and steady hope. When Fate selects her human agents, her dark and mysterious spirit is at work within them; she moulds their hearts, she exalts their energies, she shapes them to the part she has allotted them, and renders the mortal instrument worthy of the solemn end.

Thus chewing the cud of his involved and deep reflections, the young adventurer paused at last opposite his host, who was still bending over his pleasant task, and every now and then, excited by the exercise and the fresh morning air, breaking into snatches of some old rustic song. The contrast in mood between himself and this "Unvex'd loiterer by the world's

green ways," struck forcibly upon him. Mine host, too, was one whose appearance was better suited to his occupation than his profession. He might have told some three and sixty years; but it was a comely and green old age, his cheek was firm and ruddy, not with nightly cups, but the fresh witness of the morning breezes it was wont to court; his frame was robust, not corpulent; and his long gray hair, which fell almost to his shoulders, his clear blue eyes, and a pleasant curve in a mouth characterized by habitual good humor, completed a portrait that even many a dull observer would have paused to gaze upon. And, indeed, the good man enjoyed a certain kind of reputation for his comely looks and cheerful manner. His picture had even been taken by a young artist in the neighborhood,—nay, the likeness had been multiplied into engravings, somewhat rude and somewhat unfaithful, which might be seen occupying no unconspicuous nor dusty corner in the principal print-shop of the town. Nor was mine host's character a contradiction to his looks. He had seen enough of life to be intelligent, and had judged it rightly enough to be kind. He had passed that line so nicely given to man's codes in those admirable pages which first added delicacy of tact to the strong sense of English composition. "We have just religion enough," it is said somewhere in the "Spectator," "to make us hate, but not enough to make us love, one another." Our good landlord—peace be with his ashes!—had never halted at this limit. The country innkeeper might have furnished Goldsmith with a counterpart to his country curate: his house was equally hospitable to the poor; his heart equally tender, in a nature wiser than experience, to error, and equally open, in its warm simplicity, to distress. Peace be with thee, ——! Our grandsire was thy patron, yet a patron thou didst not want. Merit in thy capacity is seldom bare of reward. The public want no indicators to a house like thine. And who requires a third person to tell him how to appreciate the value of good nature and good cheer?

As Walter stood and contemplated the old man bending over the sweet fresh earth (and then, glancing round, saw the quiet

garden stretching away on either side, with its boundaries lost among the thick evergreen), something of that grateful and moralizing stillness with which some country scene generally inspires us when we awake to its consciousness from the troubled dream of dark and unquiet thought, stole over his mind, and certain old lines which his uncle, who loved the soft and rustic morality that pervades the ancient race of English minstrels, had taught him, when a boy, came pleasantly into his recollection: —

> "With all, as in some rare limned book, we see
> Here painted lectures of God's sacred will.
> The daisy teacheth lowliness of mind;
> The camomile, we should be patient still;
> The rue, our hate of vice's poison ill;
> The woodbine, that we should our friendship hold;
> Our hope the savory in the bitterest cold."[1]

The old man stopped from his work as the musing figure of his guest darkened the prospect before him, and said,—

"A pleasant time, sir, for the gardener!"

"Ay, is it so? You must miss the fruits and flowers of summer."

"Well, sir, but we are now paying back the garden for the good things it has given us. It is like taking care of a friend in old age who has been kind to us when he was young."

Walter smiled at the quaint amiability of the idea.

"'T is a winning thing, sir, a garden! It brings us an object every day; and that 's what I think a man ought to have if he wishes to lead a happy life."

"It is true," said Walter; and mine host was encouraged to continue by the attention and affable countenance of the stranger, for he was a physiognomist in his way.

"And then, sir, we have no disappointment in these objects; the soil is not ungrateful, as they say men are,—though I have not often found them so, by the by. What we sow we reap. I have an old book, sir, lying in my little parlor, all about fishing, and full of so many pretty sayings about a country life, and meditation, and so forth, that it does one as much

[1] Henry Peacham.

good as a sermon to look into it. But to my mind, all those sayings are more applicable to a gardener's life than a fisherman's."

"It is a less cruel life, certainly," said Walter.

"Yes, sir; and then the scenes one makes one's self, the flowers one plants with one's own hand, one enjoys more than all the beauties which don't owe us anything,—at least so it seems to me. I have always been thankful to the accident that made me take to gardening."

"And what was that?"

"Why, sir, you must know there was a great scholar, though he was but a youth then, living in this town some years ago, and he was very curious in plants and flowers and such like. I have heard the parson say he knew more of those innocent matters than any man in this county. At that time I was not in so flourishing a way of business as I am at present. I kept a little inn in the outskirts of the town; and having formerly been a gamekeeper of my Lord ——'s, I was in the habit of eking out my little profits by accompanying gentlemen in fishing or snipe-shooting. So one day, sir, I went out fishing with a strange gentleman from London, and in a very quiet, retired spot, some miles off, he stopped and plucked some herbs that seemed to me common enough, but which he declared were most curious and rare things, and he carried them carefully away. I heard afterwards he was a great herbalist, I think they call it, but he was a very poor fisher. Well, sir, I thought the next morning of Mr. Aram, our great scholar and botanist, and fancied it would please him to know of these bits of grass; so I went and called upon him, and begged leave to go and show the spot to him. So we walked there; and certainly, sir, of all the men that ever I saw, I never met one that wound round your heart like this same Eugene Aram. He was then exceedingly poor, but he never complained, and was much too proud for any one to dare to offer him relief. He lived quite alone, and usually avoided every one in his walks; but, sir, there was something so engaging and patient in his manner and his voice and his pale, mild countenance, which, young as he was then, for he was

not a year or two above twenty, was marked with sadness and melancholy, that it quite went to your heart when you met him or spoke to him. Well, sir, we walked to the place, and very much delighted he seemed with the green things I showed him; and as I was always of a communicative temper,—rather a gossip, sir, my neighbors say,—I made him smile now and then by my remarks. He seemed pleased with me, and talked to me going home about flowers and gardening and such like; and sure it was better than a book to hear him. And after that, when we came across one another, he would not shun me as he did others, but let me stop and talk to him; and then I asked his advice about a wee farm I thought of taking, and he told me many curious things which, sure enough, I found quite true, and brought me in afterwards a deal of money. But we talked much about gardening, for I loved to hear him talk on those matters; and so, sir, I was struck by all he said, and could not rest till I took to gardening myself, and ever since I have gone on, more pleased with it every day of my life. Indeed, sir, I think these harmless pursuits make a man's heart better and kinder to his fellow-creatures; and I always take more pleasure in reading the Bible, specially the New Testament, after having spent the day in the garden. Ah, well! I should like to know what has become of that poor gentleman."

"I can relieve your honest heart about him. Mr. Aram is living in ——, well off in the world, and universally liked; though he still keeps to his old habits of reserve."

"Ay, indeed, sir! I have not heard anything that pleased me more this many a day."

"Pray," said Walter, after a moment's pause, "do you remember the circumstance of a Mr. Clarke appearing in this town, and leaving it in a very abrupt and mysterious manner?"

"Do I mind it, sir? Yes, indeed. It made a great noise in Knaresborough; there were many suspicions of foul play about it. For my part, I too had my thoughts,—but that's neither here nor there;" and the old man recommenced weeding with great diligence.

"My friend," said Walter, mastering his emotion, "you

would serve me more deeply than I can express if you would give me any information, any conjecture, respecting this — this Mr. Clarke. I have come hither solely to make inquiry after his fate; in a word, he is — or was — a near relative of mine!"

The old man looked wistfully in Walter's face. "Indeed," said he, slowly, "you are welcome, sir, to all I know; but that is very little, or nothing rather. But will you turn up this walk, sir, — it 's more retired. Did you ever hear of one Richard Houseman?"

"Houseman? Yes; he knew my poor — I mean he knew Clarke; he said Clarke was in his debt when he left the town so suddenly."

The old man shook his head mysteriously, and looked round. "I will tell you," said he, laying his hand on Walter's arm, and speaking in his ear: "I would not accuse any one wrongfully, but I have my doubts that Houseman murdered him."

"Great God!" murmured Walter, clinging to a post for support. "Go on! Heed me not, heed me not; for mercy's sake go on."

"Nay, I know nothing certain, nothing certain, believe me," said the old man, shocked at the effect his words had produced; "it may be better than I think for, and my reasons are not very strong, but you shall hear them. Mr. Clarke, you know, came to this town to receive a legacy, — you know the particulars?"

Walter impatiently nodded assent.

"Well, though he seemed in poor health, he was a lively, careless man, who liked any company who would sit and tell stories and drink o' nights, — not a silly man exactly, but a weak one. Now of all the idle persons of this town, Richard Houseman was the most inclined to this way of life. He had been a soldier; had wandered a good deal about the world; was a bold, talking, reckless fellow, of a character thoroughly profligate, and there were many stories afloat about him, though none were clearly made out, — in short, he was suspected of having occasionally taken to the high road; and a stranger, who stopped once at my little inn, assured me privately that

though he could not positively swear to his person, he felt convinced that he had been stopped a year before on the London road by Houseman. Notwithstanding all this, as Houseman had some respectable connections in the town (among his relations, by the by, was Mr. Aram), as he was a thoroughly boon companion, a good shot, a bold rider, excellent at a song, and very cheerful and merry, he was not without as much company as he pleased; and the first night he and Mr. Clarke came together they grew mighty intimate,—indeed it seemed as if they had met before. On the night Mr. Clarke disappeared, I had been on an excursion with some gentlemen; and in consequence of the snow, which had been heavy during the latter part of the day, I did not return to Knaresborough till past midnight. In walking through the town, I perceived two men engaged in earnest conversation: one of them, I am sure, was Clarke; the other was wrapped up in a great-coat, with the cape over his face,—but the watchman had met the same man alone at an earlier hour, and, putting aside the cape, perceived that it was Houseman. No one else was seen with Clarke after that hour."

"But was not Houseman examined?"

"Slightly, and deposed that he had been spending the night with Eugene Aram; that on leaving Aram's house he met Clarke, and wondering that he, the latter, an invalid, should be out at so late an hour, he walked some way with him, in order to learn the cause; but that Clarke seemed confused, and was reserved and on his guard, and at last wished him good-by abruptly, and turned away; that he, Houseman, had no doubt he left the town that night, with the intention of defrauding his creditors and making off with some jewels he had borrowed from Mr. Elmore."

"But, Aram,—was this suspicious, nay, abandoned character—this Houseman—intimate with Aram?"

"Not at all; but being distantly related, and Houseman being a familiar, pushing sort of a fellow, Aram could not, perhaps, always shake him off; and Aram allowed that Houseman had spent the evening with him."

"And no suspicion rested on Aram?"

The host turned round in amazement. "Heavens above, no! One might as well suspect the lamb of eating the wolf!"

But not thus thought Walter Lester; the wild words occasionally uttered by the student, his lone habits, his frequent starts and colloquy with self, all of which had, even from the first, it has been seen, excited Walter's suspicion of former guilt that had murdered the mind's wholesome sleep, now rushed with tenfold force upon his memory.

"But no other circumstance transpired? Is this your whole ground for suspicion,—the mere circumstance of Houseman's being last seen with Clarke?"

"Consider also the dissolute and bold character of Houseman. Clarke evidently had his jewels and money with him,—they were not left in the house. What a temptation to one who was more than suspected of having in the course of his life taken to plunder! Houseman shortly afterwards left the country. He has never returned to the town since, though his daughter lives here with his wife's mother, and has occasionally gone up to town to see him."

"And Aram,—he also left Knaresborough soon after this mysterious event?"

"Yes; an old aunt at York, who had never assisted him during her life, died and bequeathed him a legacy about a month afterwards. On receiving it he naturally went to London,—the best place for such clever scholars."

"Ha! but are you sure that the aunt died, that the legacy was left? Might not this be a tale to give an excuse to the spending of money otherwise acquired?"

Mine host looked almost with anger on Walter.

"It is clear," said he, "you know nothing of Eugene Aram, or you would not speak thus. But I can satisfy your doubts on this head. I knew the old lady well, and my wife was at York when she died. Besides, every one here knows something of the will, for it was rather an eccentric one."

Walter paused irresolutely. "Will you accompany me," he asked, "to the house in which Mr. Clarke lodged,—and, indeed, to any other place where it may be prudent to institute inquiry?"

"Certainly, sir, with the biggest pleasure," said mine host; "but you must first try my dame's butter and eggs. It is time to breakfast."

We may suppose that Walter's simple meal was soon over; and growing impatient and restless to commence his inquiries, he descended from his solitary apartment to the little back-room behind the bar, in which he had, on the night before, seen mine host and his better half at supper. It was a snug, small, wainscoted room; fishing-rods were neatly arranged against the wall, which was also decorated by a portrait of the landlord himself, two old Dutch pictures of fruit and game, a long, quaint-fashioned fowling-piece, and, opposite the fire-place, a noble stag's head and antlers. On the window-seat lay the Isaak Walton to which the old man had referred; the Family Bible, with its green-baize cover and the frequent marks peeping out from its venerable pages; and, close nestling to it, recalling that beautiful sentence, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not," several of those little volumes with gay bindings and marvellous contents of fay and giant which delight the hearth-spelled urchin, and which were "the source of golden hours" to the old man's grandchildren, in their respite from "learning's little tenements," —

> "Where sits the dame, disguised in look profound,
> And eyes her fairy throng, and turns her wheel around."[1]

Mine host was still employed by a huge brown loaf and some baked pike, and mine hostess, a quiet and serene old lady, was alternately regaling herself and a large brindled cat from a plate of "toasten cheer."

While the old man was hastily concluding his repast, a little knock at the door was heard, and presently an elderly gentleman in black put his head into the room, and perceiving the stranger, would have drawn back; but both landlady and landlord, bustling up, entreated him to enter by the appellation of Mr. Summers. And then, as the gentleman smilingly yielded to the invitation, the landlady, turning to Walter, said,

[1] Shenstone's Schoolmistress.

"Our clergyman, sir; and though I say it afore his face, there is not a man who, if Christian vartues were considered, ought so soon to be a bishop."

"Hush! my good lady," said Mr. Summers, laughing as he bowed to Walter. "You see, sir, that it is no trifling advantage to a Knaresborough reputation to have our hostess's good word. But, indeed," turning to the landlady, and assuming a grave and impressive air, "I have little mind for jesting now. You know poor Jane Houseman,—a mild, quiet, blue-eyed creature,—she died at daybreak this morning! Her father had come from London expressly to see her. She died in his arms, and I hear he is almost in a state of frenzy."

The host and hostess signified their commiseration. "Poor little girl!" said the latter, wiping her eyes, "hers was a hard fate, and she felt it, child as she was. Without the care of a mother—and such a father! Yet he was fond of her."

"My reason for calling on you was this," renewed the clergyman, addressing the host: "you knew Houseman formerly; me he always shunned, and, I fancy, ridiculed. He is in distress now, and all that is forgotten. Will you seek him, and inquire if anything in my power can afford him consolation? He may be poor: *I* can pay for the poor child's burial. I loved her: she was the best girl at Mrs. Summers' school."

"Certainly, sir, I will seek him," said the landlord, hesitating; and then, drawing the clergyman aside, he informed him in a whisper of his engagement with Walter, and with the present pursuit and meditated inquiry of his guest, not forgetting to insinuate his suspicion of the guilt of the man whom he was now called upon to compassionate.

The clergyman mused a little; and then, approaching Walter, offered his services in the stead of the publican in so frank and cordial a manner that Walter at once accepted them.

"Let us come now, then," said the good curate,—for he was but the curate,—seeing Walter's impatience; "and first we will go to the house in which Clarke lodged,—I know it well."

The two gentlemen now commenced their expedition. Summers was no contemptible antiquary, and he sought to beguile

the nervous impatience of his companion by dilating on the attractions of the ancient and memorable town to which his purpose had brought him.

"Remarkable," said the curate, "alike in history and tradition. Look yonder," pointing above, as an opening in the road gave to view the frowning and beetled ruins of the shattered castle; "you would be at some loss to recognize now the truth of old Leland's description of that once stout and gallant bulwark of the North, when he 'numbrid 11 or 12 towres in the walles of the castel, and one very fayre beside in the second area.' In that castle the four knightly murderers of the haughty Becket (the Wolsey of his age) remained for a whole year, defying the weak justice of the times. There, too, the unfortunate Richard the Second — the Stuart of the Plantagenets — passed some portion of his bitter imprisonment. And there, after the battle of Marston Moor, waved the banners of the loyalists against the soldiers of Lilburne. It was made yet more touchingly memorable at that time, as you may have heard, by an instance of filial piety. The town was greatly straitened for want of provisions; a youth, whose father was in the garrison, was accustomed nightly to get into the deep dry moat, climb up the glacis, and put provisions through a hole, where the father stood ready to receive them. He was perceived at length; the soldiers fired on him. He was taken prisoner and sentenced to be hanged in sight of the besieged, in order to strike terror into those who might be similarly disposed to render assistance to the garrison. Fortunately, however, this disgrace was spared the memory of Lilburne and the republican arms. With great difficulty a certain lady obtained his respite; and after the conquest of the place and the departure of the troops, the adventurous son was released."

"A fit subject for your local poets," said Walter, whom stories of this sort, from the nature of his own enterprise, especially affected.

"Yes; but we boast but few minstrels since the young Aram left us. The castle then, once the residence of John of Gaunt, was dismantled and destroyed. Many of the houses we shall pass have been built from its massive ruins. It is

singular, by the way, that it was twice captured by men of the name of Lilburn or Lillburne,—once in the reign of Edward II.; once as I have related. On looking over historical records, we are surprised to find how often certain names have been fatal to certain spots,—and this reminds me, by the way, that we boast the origin of the English sibyl, the venerable Mother Shipton. The wild rock, at whose foot she is said to have been born, is worthy of the tradition."

"You spoke just now," said Walter, who had not very patiently suffered the curate thus to ride his hobby, "of Eugene Aram: you knew him well?"

"Nay; he suffered not any to do that! He was a remarkable youth. I have noted him from his childhood upward, long before he came to Knaresborough, till on leaving this place, fourteen years back, I lost sight of him. Strange, musing, solitary from a boy; but what accomplishment of learning he had reached! Never did I see one whom Nature so emphatically marked to be GREAT. I often wonder that his name has not long ere this been more universally noised abroad, whatever he attempted was stamped with such signal success. I have by me some scattered pieces of his poetry when a boy; they were given me by his poor father, long since dead, and are full of a dim, shadowy anticipation of future fame. Perhaps yet, before he dies,—he is still young,—the presentiment will be realized. You, too, know him, then?"

"Yes, I have known him. Stay—dare I ask you a question, a fearful question? Did suspicion ever, in your mind, in the mind of any one, rest on Aram as concerned in the mysterious disappearance of my—of Clarke? His acquaintance with Houseman who *was* suspected; Houseman's visit to Aram that night; his previous poverty,—so extreme, if I hear rightly; his after riches,—though they perhaps *may* be satisfactorily accounted for; his leaving this town so shortly after the disappearance I refer to: these alone might not create suspicion in me; but I have seen the man in moments of revery and abstraction, I have listened to strange and broken words, I have noted a sudden, keen, and angry susceptibility to any unmeant appeal to a less peaceful or less innocent re-

membrance. And there seems to me inexplicably to hang over his heart some gloomy recollection, which I cannot divest myself from imagining to be that of guilt."

Walter spoke quickly, and in great though half-suppressed excitement, the more kindled from observing that as he spoke, Summers changed countenance, and listened as with painful and uneasy attention.

"I will tell you," said the curate, after a short pause (lowering his voice),—"I will tell you. Aram did undergo examination,—I was present at it; but from his character, and the respect universally felt for him, the examination was close and secret. He was not, mark me, suspected of the murder of the unfortunate Clarke, nor was any suspicion of murder generally entertained until all means of discovering Clarke were found wholly unavailing, but of sharing with Houseman some part of the jewels with which Clarke was known to have left the town. This suspicion of robbery could not, however, be brought home even to Houseman, and Aram was satisfactorily acquitted from the imputation. But in the minds of some present at that examination a doubt lingered; and this doubt certainly deeply wounded a man so proud and susceptible. This, I believe, was the real reason of his quitting Knaresborough almost immediately after that examination. And some of us who felt for him, and were convinced of his innocence, persuaded the others to hush up the circumstance of his examination; nor has it generally transpired, even to this day, when the whole business is wellnigh forgot. But as to his subsequent improvement in circumstances, there is no doubt of his aunt's having left him a legacy sufficient to account for it."

Walter bowed his head, and felt his suspicions waver, when the curate renewed:—

"Yet it is but fair to tell you, who seem so deeply interested in the fate of Clarke, that since that period rumors have reached my ear that the woman at whose house Aram lodged, has from time to time dropped words that require explanation,—hints that she could tell a tale; that she knows more than men will readily believe; nay, once she is even re-

ported to have said that the life of Eugene Aram was in her power."

"Father of mercy! and did inquiry sleep on words so calling for its liveliest examination?"

"Not wholly. When the words were reported to me, I went to the house, but found the woman, whose habits and character are low and worthless, was abrupt and insolent in her manner; and after in vain endeavoring to call forth some explanation of the words she was said to have uttered, I left the house fully persuaded that she had only given vent to a meaningless boast, and that the idle words of a disorderly gossip could not be taken as evidence against a man of the blameless character and austere habits of Aram. Since, however, you have now re-awakened investigation, we will visit her before you leave the town; and it may be as well, too, that Houseman should undergo a further investigation before we suffer him to depart."

"I thank you, I thank you! I will not let slip one thread of this dark clew!"

"And now," said the curate, pointing to a decent house, "we have reached the lodging Clarke occupied in the town."

An old man of respectable appearance opened the door, and welcomed the curate and his companion with an air of cordial respect which attested the well-deserved popularity of the former.

"We have come," said the curate, "to ask you some questions respecting Daniel Clarke, whom you remember as your lodger. This gentleman is a relation of his, and interested deeply in his fate."

"What, sir!" quoth the old man, "and have *you*, his relation, never heard of Mr. Clarke since he left the town? Strange! This room, this very room, was the one Mr. Clarke occupied; and next to this, here [opening a door] was his bed-chamber!"

It was not without powerful emotion that Walter found himself thus within the apartment of his lost father. What a painful, what a gloomy, yet sacred interest everything around instantly assumed! The old-fashioned and heavy

chairs; the brown wainscot walls; the little cupboard recessed as it were to the right of the fireplace, and piled with morsels of Indian china and long taper wine-glasses; the small window-panes set deep in the wall, giving a dim view of a bleak and melancholy looking garden in the rear; yea, the very floor he trod, the very table on which he leaned, the very hearth, dull and fireless as it was, opposite his gaze,—all took a familiar meaning in his eye, and breathed a household voice into his ear. And when he entered the inner room, how, even to suffocation, were those strange, half-sad, yet not all bitter emotions increased! There was the bed on which his father had rested on the night before—what? Perhaps his murder! The bed, probably a relic from the castle when its antique furniture was set up to public sale, was hung with faded tapestry, and above its dark and polished summit were hearse-like and heavy trappings. Old commodes of rudely carved oak, a discolored glass in a Japan frame, a ponderous arm-chair of Elizabethan fashion, and covered with the same tapestry as the bed, altogether gave that uneasy and sepulchral impression to the mind so commonly produced by the relics of a mouldering and forgotten antiquity.

"It looks cheerless, sir," said the owner; "but then we have not had any regular lodger for years,—it is just the same as when Mr. Clarke lived here. But bless you, sir, he made the dull rooms look gay enough. He was a blithesome gentleman. He and his friends, Mr. Houseman especially, used to make the walls ring again when they were over their cups!"

"It might have been better for Mr. Clarke," said the curate, "had he chosen his comrades with more discretion. Houseman was not a creditable, perhaps not a *safe* companion."

"That was no business of mine then," quoth the lodging-letter; "but it might be now, since I have been a married man!"

The curate smiled. "Perhaps you, Mr. Moor, bore a part in those revels?"

"Why, indeed, Mr. Clarke would occasionally make me take a glass or so, sir."

"And you must then have heard the conversations that took place between Houseman and him. Did Mr. Clarke ever, in those conversations, intimate an intention of leaving the town soon? And where, if so, did he talk of going?"

"Oh! first to London. I have often heard him talk of going to London, and then taking a trip to see some relations of his in a distant part of the country. I remember his caressing a little boy of my brother's,—you know Jack, sir; not a little boy now, almost as tall as this gentleman. 'Ah!' said he, with a sort of sigh, 'ah! I have a boy at home about this age: when shall I see him again?'"

"When indeed!" thought Walter, turning away his face at this anecdote, to him so naturally affecting.

"And the night that Clarke left you, were you aware of his absence?"

"No, he went to his room at his usual hour, which was late; and the next morning I found his bed had not been slept in, and he was gone,—gone with all his jewels, money, and valuables; heavy luggage he had none. He was a cunning gentleman; he never loved paying a bill. He was greatly in debt in different parts of the town, though he had not been here long. He ordered everything and paid for nothing."

Walter groaned. It was his father's character exactly: partly it might be from dishonest principles superadded to the earlier feelings of his nature; but partly also from that temperament, at once careless and procrastinating, which, more often than vice, loses men the advantage of reputation.

"Then in your own mind, and from your knowledge of him," renewed the curate, "you would suppose that Clarke's disappearance was intentional,—that though nothing has since been heard of him, none of the blacker rumors afloat were well-founded?"

"I confess, sir, begging this gentleman's pardon, who you say is a relation, I confess *I* see no reason to think otherwise."

"Was Mr. Aram—Eugene Aram—ever a guest of Clarke? Did you ever see them together?"

"Never at this house. I fancy Houseman once presented Mr. Aram to Clarke, and that they may have met and con-

versed some two or three times,—not more, I believe; they were scarcely congenial spirits, sir."

Walter, having now recovered his self-possession, entered into the conversation, and endeavored, by as minute an examination as his ingenuity could suggest, to obtain some additional light upon the mysterious subject so deeply at his heart. Nothing, however, of any effectual import was obtained from the good man of the house. He had evidently persuaded himself that Clarke's disappearance was easily accounted for, and would scarcely lend attention to any other suggestion than that of Clarke's dishonesty. Nor did his recollection of the meetings between Houseman and Clarke furnish him with anything worthy of narration. With a spirit somewhat damped and disappointed, Walter, accompanied by the curate, recommenced his expedition.

CHAPTER XI.

GRIEF IN A RUFFIAN.—THE CHAMBER OF EARLY DEATH.—A HOMELY YET MOMENTOUS CONFESSION.—THE EARTH'S SECRETS.—THE CAVERN.—THE ACCUSATION.

> All is not well;
> I doubt some foul play.
> . . . . . .
> Foul deeds will rise,
> Though all the earth o'erwhelm them, to men's eyes.—*Hamlet.*

As they passed through the street, they perceived three or four persons standing round the open door of a house of ordinary description, the windows of which were partially closed.

"It is the house," said the curate, "in which Houseman's daughter died,—poor, poor child! Yet why mourn for the young? Better that the light cloud should fade away into heaven with the morning breath, than travel through the weary day to gather in darkness and end in storm."

"Ah, sir!" said an old man, leaning on his stick and lifting his hat, in obeisance to the curate, "the father is within, and takes on bitterly. He drives them all away from the room, and sits moaning by the bedside, as if he was a going out of his mind. Won't your reverence go in to him a bit?"

The curate looked at Walter inquiringly. "Perhaps," said the latter, "you had better go in: I will wait without."

While the curate hesitated, they heard a voice in the passage; and presently Houseman was seen at the far end, driving some women before him with vehement gesticulations.

"I tell you, ye hell-hags," shrieked his harsh and now straining voice, "that ye suffered her to die! Why did ye not send to London for physicians? Am I not rich enough to buy my child's life at any price? By the living ——, I would have turned your very bodies into gold to have saved her! But she's DEAD! and I — Out of my sight; out of my way!" And with his hands clenched, his brows knit, and his head uncovered, Houseman sallied forth from the door, and Walter recognized the traveller of the preceding night. He stopped abruptly as he saw the little knot without, and scowled round at each of them with a malignant and ferocious aspect. "Very well, it's very well, neighbors!" said he at length, with a fierce laugh; "this is kind! You have come to welcome Richard Houseman home, have ye? Good, good! Not to gloat at his distress? Lord, no! Ye have no idle curiosity, no prying, searching, gossiping devil within ye that makes ye love to flock and gape and chatter when poor men suffer! This is all pure compassion; and Houseman, the good, gentle, peaceful, honest Houseman, you feel for *him*,—I know you do! Hark ye, begone! Away, march, tramp, or — Ha, ha! there they go, there they go!" laughing wildly again as the frightened neighbors shrank from the spot, leaving only Walter and the clergyman with the childless man.

"Be comforted, Houseman!" said Summers, soothingly; "it is a dreadful affliction that you have sustained. I knew your daughter well: you may have heard her speak of me. Let us in, and try what heavenly comfort there is in prayer."

"Prayer! pooh! I am Richard Houseman!"

"Lives there one man for whom prayer is unavailing?"

"Out, canter, out! My pretty Jane! And she laid her head on my bosom, and looked up in my face, and so — died!"

"Come," said the curate, placing his hand on Houseman's arm, "come."

Before he could proceed, Houseman, who was muttering to himself, shook him off roughly, and hurried away up the street; but after he had gone a few paces, he turned back, and approaching the curate, said, in a more collected tone: "I pray you, sir, since you are a clergyman (I recollect your face, and I recollect Jane said you had been good to her), — I pray you go and say a few words over her. But stay, — don't bring in my name; you understand. I don't wish God to recollect that there lives such a man as he who now addresses you. Halloo! [shouting to the women] my hat, and stick too. Fal lal la! fal la! — why should these things make us play the madman? It is a fine day, sir; we shall have a late winter. Curse the b——, how long she is! Yet the hat was left below. But when a death is in the house, sir, it throws things into confusion: don't you find it so?"

Here one of the women, pale, trembling, and tearful, brought the ruffian his hat; and placing it deliberately on his head, and bowing with a dreadful and convulsive attempt to smile, he walked slowly away and disappeared.

"What strange mummers grief makes!" said the curate. "It is an appalling spectacle when it thus wrings out feeling from a man of that mould! But pardon me, my young friend; let me tarry here for a moment."

"I will enter the house with you," said Walter. And the two men walked in, and in a few moments they stood within the chamber of death.

The face of the deceased had not yet suffered the last withering change. Her young countenance was hushed and serene, and but for the fixedness of the smile, you might have thought the lips moved. So delicate, fair, and gentle were the features that it was scarcely possible to believe such a scion could spring from such a stock; and it seemed no longer wonderful that a thing so young, so innocent, so lovely, and so early

blighted should have touched that reckless and dark nature which rejected all other invasion of the softer emotions. The curate wiped his eyes, and kneeling down prayed, if not for the dead (who, as our Church teaches, are beyond human intercession), perhaps for the father she had left on earth,—more to be pitied of the two! Nor to Walter was the scene without something more impressive and thrilling than its mere pathos alone. He, now standing beside the corpse of Houseman's child, was son to the man of whose murder Houseman had been suspected. The childless and the fatherless, —might there be no retribution here?

When the curate's prayer was over, and he and Walter escaped from the incoherent blessings and complaints of the women of the house, they, with difficulty resisting the impression the scene had left upon their minds, once more resumed their errand.

"This is no time," said Walter, musingly, "for an examination of Houseman; yet it must not be forgotten."

The curate did not reply for some moments; and then, as an answer to the remark, observed that the conversation they anticipated with Aram's former hostess might throw some light on their researches. They now proceeded to another part of the town, and arrived at a lonely and desolate-looking house, which seemed to wear in its very appearance something strange, sad, and ominous. Some houses have an *expression,* as it were, in their outward aspect that sinks unaccountably into the heart,—a dim, oppressive eloquence which dispirits and affects. You say some story must be attached to those walls; some legendary interest, of a darker nature, ought to be associated with the mute stone and mortar; you feel a mingled awe and curiosity creep over you as you gaze. Such was the description of the house that the young adventurer now surveyed. It was of antique architecture, not uncommon in old towns; gable ends rose from the roof; dull, small, latticed panes were sunk deep in the gray, discolored wall; the pale, in part, was broken and jagged; and rank weeds sprang up in the neglected garden, through which they walked towards the porch. The door was open; they

entered, and found an old woman of coarse appearance sitting by the fireside, and gazing on space with that vacant stare which so often characterizes the repose and relaxation of the uneducated poor. Walter felt an involuntary thrill of dislike come over him as he looked at the solitary inmate of the solitary house.

"Hey day, sir!" said she, in a grating voice, "and what now? Oh! Mr. Summers, is it you? You 're welcome, sir! I wishes I could offer you a glass of summut, but the bottle 's dry — he! he!" pointing, with a revolting grin, to an empty bottle that stood on a niche within the hearth. "I don't know how it is, sir, but I never wants to eat; but ah! 't is the liquor that does un good!"

"You have lived a long time in this house?" said the curate.

"A long time, — some thirty years an' more."

"You remember your lodger, Mr. Aram?"

"A — well — yes!"

"An excellent man —"

"Humph."

"A most admirable man!"

"A-humph! he! — humph! that 's neither here nor there."

"Why, you don't seem to think as all the rest of the world does with regard to him?"

"I knows what I knows."

"Ah! by the by, you have some cock-and-a-bull story about him, I fancy, but you never could explain yourself, — it is merely for the love of seeming wise that you invented it, eh, Goody?"

The old woman shook her head, and crossing her hands on her knee, replied with peculiar emphasis, but in a very low and whispered voice, "I could hang him!"

"Pooh!"

"Tell you I could!"

"Well, let 's have the story then!"

"No, no! I have not told it to ne'er a one yet, and I won't for nothing. What will you give me? Make it worth my while."

"Tell us all, honestly, fairly, and fully, and you shall have five golden guineas. There, Goody."

Roused by this promise, the dame looked up with more of energy than she had yet shown, and muttered to herself, rocking her chair to and fro: "Aha! why not? No fear now,—both gone; can't now murder the poor old cretur, as the wretch once threatened. Five golden guineas,—five, did you say, sir, five?"

"Ah! and perhaps our bounty may not stop there," said the curate.

Still the old woman hesitated, and still she muttered to herself; but after some further prelude, and some further enticement from the curate, the which we spare our reader, she came at length to the following narration:—

"It was on the 7th of February, in the year '44,—yes, '44, about six o'clock in the evening, for I was a-washing in the kitchen,—when Mr. Aram called to me an' desired of me to make a fire upstairs, which I did; he then walked out. Some hours afterwards, it might be two in the morning, I was lying awake, for I was mighty bad with the toothache, when I heard a noise below, and two or three voices. On this I was greatly afeard, and got out o' bed, and opening the door, I saw Mr. Houseman and Mr. Clarke coming upstairs to Mr. Aram's room, and Mr. Aram followed them. They shut the door, and stayed there, it might be an hour. Well, I could not a think what could make so shy an' resarved a gentleman as Mr. Aram admit these 'ere wild madcaps like at that hour; an' I lay awake a thinking an' a thinking, till I heard the door open agin, an' I went to listen at the keyhole, an' Mr. Clarke said: 'It will soon be morning, and we must get off.' They then all three left the house. But I could not sleep, an' I got up afore five o'clock; and about that hour Mr. Aram an' Mr. Houseman returned, and they both glowered at me as if they did not like to find me a stirring; an' Mr. Aram went into his room, and Houseman turned and frowned at me as black as night. Lord have mercy on me, I see him now! An' I was sadly feared, an' I listened at the keyhole, an' I heard Houseman say: 'If the woman comes in, she 'll tell.'

'What can she tell?' said Mr. Aram; 'poor simple thing, she knows nothing.' With that, Houseman said, says he: 'If she tells that I am here, it will be enough; but however [with a shocking oath], we 'll take an opportunity to shoot her.'

"On that I was so frighted that I went away back to my own room, and did not stir till they had gone out, and then—"

"What time was that?"

"About seven o'clock. Well— You put me out! where was I? Well, I went into Mr. Aram's, an' I seed they had been burning a fire, an' that all the ashes were taken out o' the grate; so I went an' looked at the rubbish behind the house, and there sure enough I seed the ashes, and among 'em several bits o' cloth and linen which seemed to belong to wearing apparel; and there, too, was a handkerchief which I had obsarved Houseman wear (for it was a very curious handkerchief, all spotted) many 's the time, and there was blood on it, 'bout the size of a shilling. An' afterwards I seed Houseman, an' I showed him the handkerchief; and I said to him, 'What has come of Clarke?' An' he frowned, and, looking at me, said, 'Hark ye, I know not what you mean; but as sure as the devil keeps watch for souls, I will shoot you through the head if you ever let that d—d tongue of yours let slip a single word about Clarke or me or Mr. Aram,—so look to yourself!'

"An' I was all scared, and trimbled from limb to limb; an' for two whole yearn afterwards (long arter Aram and Houseman were both gone (I never could so much as open my lips on the matter; and afore he went, Mr. Aram would sometimes look at me, not sternly-like, as the villain Houseman, but as if he would read to the bottom of my heart. Oh! I was as if you had taken a mountain off o' me when he an' Houseman left the town; for sure as the sun shines I believes, from what I have now said, that they two murdered Clarke on that same February night. An' now, Mr. Summers, I feels more easy than I has felt for many a long day; an' if I have not told it afore, it is because I thought of Houseman's frown and his horrid words; but summut of it would ooze out of my

tongue now an' then, for it 's a hard thing, sir, to know a secret o' that sort and be quiet and still about it; and, indeed, I was not the same cretur when I knew it as I was afore, for it made me take to anything rather than thinking; and that 's the reason, sir, I lost the good crackter I used to have."

Such, somewhat abridged from its "says he" and "says I," its involutions and its tautologies, was the story which Walter held his breath to hear. But events thicken, and the maze is nearly thridden.

"Not a moment now should be lost," said the curate, as they left the house. "Let us at once proceed to a very able magistrate, to whom I can introduce you, and who lives a little way out of the town."

"As you will," said Walter, in an altered and hollow voice. "I am as a man standing on an eminence, who views the whole scene he is to travel over, stretched before him, but is dizzy and bewildered by the height which he has reached. I know, I feel, that I am on the brink of fearful and dread discoveries; pray God that — But heed me not, sir, heed me not; let us on, on!"

It was now approaching towards the evening; and as they walked on, having left the town, the sun poured his last beams on a group of persons that appeared hastily collecting and gathering round a spot, well known in the neighborhood of Knaresborough, called Thistle Hill.

"Let us avoid the crowd," said the curate. "Yet what, I wonder, can be its cause?" While he spoke, two peasants hurried by towards the throng.

"What is the meaning of the crowd yonder?" asked the curate.

"I don't know exactly, your honor, but I hears as how Jem Ninnings, digging for stone for the limekiln, have dug out a big wooden chest."

A shout from the group broke in on the peasant's explanation, — a sudden simultaneous shout, but not of joy; something of dismay and horror seemed to breathe in the sound.

Walter looked at the curate. An impulse, a sudden instinct, seemed to attract them involuntarily to the spot whence

that sound arose; they quickened their pace, they made their way through the throng. A deep chest, that had been violently forced, stood before them; its contents had been dragged to day, and now lay on the sward — a bleached and mouldering skeleton! Several of the bones were loose, and detached from the body. A general hubbub of voices from the spectators, — inquiry, guess, fear, wonder, — rang confusedly around.

"Yes!" said one old man, with gray hair, leaning on a pick-axe, "it is now about fourteen years since the Jew pedlar disappeared. These are probably his bones, — he was supposed to have been murdered!"

"Nay!" screeched a woman, drawing back a child who, all unalarmed, was about to touch the ghastly relics, "nay, the pedlar was heard of afterwards. I 'll tell ye, ye may be sure these are the bones of Clarke, — Daniel Clarke, — whom the country was so stirred about when we were young!"

"Right, dame, right! It is Clarke's skeleton," was the simultaneous cry. And Walter, pressing forward, stood over the bones, and waved his hand as to guard them from further insult. His sudden appearance, his tall stature, his wild gesture, the horror, the paleness, the grief of his countenance, struck and appalled all present. He remained speechless, and a sudden silence succeeded the late clamor.

"And what do you here, fools?" said a voice, abruptly. The spectators turned: a new comer had been added to the throng, — it was Richard Houseman. His dress loose and disarranged, his flushed cheeks and rolling eyes, betrayed the source of consolation to which he had flown from his domestic affliction. "What do ye here?" said he, reeling forward. "Ha! human bones? And whose may they be, think ye?"

"They are Clarke's!" said the woman, who had first given rise to that supposition.

"Yes, we think they are Daniel Clarke's, — he who disappeared some years ago!" cried two or three voices in concert.

"Clarke's?" repeated Houseman, stooping down and picking up a thigh-bone, which lay at a little distance from the

rest; "Clarke's? Ha! ha! they are no more Clarke's than mine!"

"Behold!" shouted Walter, in a voice that rang from cliff to plain; and springing forward, he seized Houseman with a giant's grasp,—"behold the murderer!"

As if the avenging voice of Heaven had spoken, a thrilling, an electric conviction darted through the crowd. Each of the elder spectators remembered at once the person of Houseman, and the suspicion that had attached to his name.

"Seize him! seize him!" burst forth from twenty voices. "Houseman is the murderer!"

"Murderer!" faltered Houseman, trembling in the iron hands of Walter,—"murderer of whom? I tell ye these are not Clarke's bones!"

"Where then do *they* lie?" cried his arrester.

Pale, confused, conscience-stricken, the bewilderment of intoxication mingling with that of fear, Houseman turned a ghastly look around him, and, shrinking from the eyes of all, reading in the eyes of all his condemnation, he gasped out, "Search St. Robert's Cave, in the turn at the entrance!"

"Away!" rang the deep voice of Walter, on the instant; "away! To the cave, to the cave!"

On the banks of the River Nid, whose waters keep an everlasting murmur to the crags and trees that overhang them, is a wild and dreary cavern, hollowed from a rock which, according to tradition, was formerly the hermitage of one of those early enthusiasts who made their solitude in the sternest recesses of earth, and from the austerest thoughts and the bitterest penance wrought their joyless offerings to the great Spirit of the lovely world. To this desolate spot, called, from the name of its once celebrated eremite, St. Robert's Cave, the crowd now swept, increasing its numbers as it advanced.

The old man who had discovered the unknown remains, which were gathered up and made a part of the procession, led the way; Houseman, placed between two strong and active men, went next; and Walter followed behind, fixing his eyes mutely upon the ruffian. The curate had had the precaution

to send on before for torches, for the wintry evening now darkened round them, and the light from the torch-bearers, who met them at the cavern, cast forth its red and lurid flare at the mouth of the chasm. One of these torches Walter himself seized, and his was the first step that entered the gloomy passage. At this place and time, Houseman, who till then, throughout their short journey, had seemed to have recovered a sort of dogged self-possession, recoiled, and the big drops of fear or agony fell fast from his brow. He was dragged forward forcibly into the cavern; and now as the space filled, and the torches flickered against the grim walls, glaring on faces which caught, from the deep and thrilling contagion of a common sentiment, one common expression, it was not well possible for the wildest imagination to conceive a scene better fitted for the unhallowed burial-place of the murdered dead.

The eyes of all now turned upon Houseman; and he, after twice vainly endeavoring to speak, for the words died inarticulate and choked within him, advancing a few steps, pointed towards a spot on which, the next moment, fell the concentrated light of every torch. An indescribable and universal murmur, and then a breathless silence, ensued. On the spot which Houseman had indicated, with the head placed to the right, lay what once had been a human body!

"Can you swear," said the priest, solemnly, as he turned to Houseman, "that these are the bones of Clarke?"

"Before God, I can swear it!" replied Houseman, at length finding his voice.

"My Father!" broke from Walter's lips as he sank upon his knees; and that exclamation completed the awe and horror which prevailed in the breasts of all present. Stung by a sense of the danger he had drawn upon himself, and despair and excitement restoring, in some measure, not only his natural hardihood, but his natural astuteness, Houseman, here mastering his emotions, and making that effort which he was afterwards enabled to follow up with an advantage to himself of which he could not then have dreamed,— Houseman, I say, cried aloud,—

"But *I* did not do the deed; I am not the murderer."

"Speak out! Whom do you accuse?" said the curate.

Drawing his breath hard, and setting his teeth as with some steeled determination, Houseman replied,—

"The murderer is Eugene Aram!"

"Aram!" shouted Walter, starting to his feet: "O God, thy hand hath directed me hither!" And suddenly and at once sense left him, and he fell, as if a shot had pierced through his heart, beside the remains of that father whom he had thus mysteriously discovered.

BOOK V.

Οἱ αὐτῷ κακὰ τεύχει ἀνὴρ ἄλλῳ κακὰ τεύχων,
Ἡ δὲ κακὴ βουλὴ τῷ βουλεύσαντι κακίστη.

HESIOD.

Surely the man that plotteth ill against his neighbor perpetrateth ill against himself, and the evil design is most evil to him that deviseth it.

CHAPTER I.

GRASSDALE.—THE MORNING OF THE MARRIAGE.—THE CRONES' GOSSIP.—THE BRIDE AT HER TOILET.—THE ARRIVAL.

JAM veniet virgo, jam dicetur Hymenæus,
Hymen, O Hymenæe! Hymen ades, O Hymenæe![1]

CATULLUS: *Carmen Nuptiale.*

IT was now the morning in which Eugene Aram was to be married to Madeline Lester. The student's house had been set in order for the arrival of the bride; and though it was yet early morn, two old women, whom his domestic (now not the only one, for a buxom lass of eighteen had been transplanted from Lester's household to meet the additional cares that the change of circumstances brought to Aram's) had invited to assist her in arranging what was already arranged, were bustling about the lower apartments and making matters, as they call it, "tidy."

"Them flowers look but poor things, after all," muttered an old crone, whom our readers will recognize as Dame Darkmans, placing a bowl of exotics on the table. "They does not look nigh so cheerful as them as grows in the open air."

[1] "Now shall the Virgin arrive; now shall be sung the Hymeneal, — Hymen Hymenæus! Be present, O Hymen Hymenæus!"

"Tush! Goody Darkmans," said the second gossip. "They be much prettier and finer, to my mind; and so said Miss Nelly when she plucked them last night and sent me down with them. They says there is not a blade o' grass that the master does not know. He must be a good man to love the things of the field so."

"Ho!" said Dame Darkmans, "ho! When Joe Wrench was hanged for shooting the lord's keeper, and he mounted the scaffold wid a nosegay in his hand, he said, in a peevish voice, says he: 'Why does not they give me a tarnation? I always loved them sort o' flowers,—I wore them when I went a courting Bess Lucas,—an' I would like to die with one in my hand!' So a man may like flowers, and be but a hempen dog after all!"

"Now don't you, Goody; be still, can't you? What a tale for a marriage day!"

"Tally vally!" returned the grim hag, "many a blessing carries a curse in its arms, as the new moon carries the old. This won't be one of your happy weddings, I tell ye."

"And why d'ye say that?"

"Did you ever see a man with a look like that make a happy husband? No, no! Can ye fancy the merry laugh o' childer in this house, or a babe on the father's knee, or the happy, still smile on the mother's winsome face, some few years hence? No, Madge! the de'il has set his black claw on the man's brow."

"Hush, hush, Goody Darkmans; he may hear o' ye!" said the second gossip, who, having now done all that remained to do, had seated herself down by the window, while the more ominous crone, leaning over Aram's oak chair, uttered from thence her sibyl bodings.

"No," replied Mother Darkmans, "I seed him go out an hour agone, when the sun was just on the rise; and I said, when I seed him stroam into the wood yonder, and the ould leaves splashed in the damp under his feet, and his hat was aboon his brows, and his lips went so,—I said, says I, 't is not the man that will make a hearth bright that would walk

thus on his marriage day. But I knows what I knows, and I minds what I seed last night."

"Why, what did you see last night?" asked the listener, with a trembling voice; for Mother Darkmans was a great teller of ghost and witch tales, and a certain ineffable awe of her dark gypsy features and malignant words had circulated pretty largely throughout the village.

"Why, I sat up here with the ould deaf woman, and we were a drinking the health of the man and his wife that is to be, and it was nigh twelve o' the clock ere I minded it was time to go home. Well, so I puts on my cloak, and the moon was up, an' I goes along by the wood, and up by Fairlegh Field, an' I was singing the ballad on Joe Wrench's hanging, for the spirats had made me gamesome, when I sees somemut dark creep, creep, but iver so fast, arter me over the field, and making right ahead to the village. And I stands still, an' I was not a bit afeared; but sure I thought it was no living cretur, at the first sight. And so it comes up faster and faster, and then I sees it was not one thing, but a many, many things, and they darkened the whole field afore me. And what d'ye think they was? A whole body o' gray rats,—thousands and thousands on 'em; and they were making away from the outbuildings here. For sure they knew, the witch things, that an ill luck sat on the spot. And so I stood aside by the tree, an' I laughed to look on the ugsome creturs as they swept close by me, tramp, tramp! and they never heeded me a jot; but some on 'em looked aslant at me with their glittering eyes, and showed their white teeth, as if they grinned, and were saying to me, 'Ha, ha! Goody Darkmans, the house that we leave is a falling house, for the devil will have his own.'"

In some parts of the country, and especially in that where our scene is laid, no omen is more superstitiously believed evil than the departure of these loathsome animals from their accustomed habitation; the instinct which is supposed to make them desert an unsafe tenement is supposed also to make them predict, in desertion, ill fortune to the possessor. But while the ears of the listening gossip were still tingling

with this narration, the dark figure of the student passed the window, and the old women, starting up, appeared in all the bustle of preparation, as Aram now entered the apartment.

"A happy day, your honor; a happy good morning," said both the crones in a breath; but the blessing of the worse-natured was vented in so harsh a croak that Aram turned round as if struck by the sound, and still more disliking the well-remembered aspect of the person from whom it came, waved his hand impatiently, and bade them begone.

"A-whish, a-whish!" muttered Dame Darkmans,—"to spake so to the poor; but the rats never lie, the bonny things!"

Aram threw himself into his chair, and remained for some moments absorbed in a revery, which did not bear the aspect of gloom. Then, walking once or twice to and fro the apartment, he stopped opposite the chimney-piece, over which were slung the firearms, which he never omitted to keep charged and primed.

"Humph!" he said, half aloud, "ye have been but idle servants; and now ye are but little likely ever to requite the care I have bestowed upon you."

With that a faint smile crossed his features; and turning away, he ascended the stairs that led to the lofty chamber in which he had been so often wont to outwatch the stars,—

> "The souls of systems, and the lords of life,
> Through their wide empires."

Before we follow him to his high and lonely retreat we will bring the reader to the manor-house, where all was already gladness and quiet but deep joy.

It wanted about three hours to that fixed for the marriage; and Aram was not expected at the manor-house till an hour before the celebration of the event. Nevertheless, the bells were already ringing loudly and blithely; and the near vicinity of the church to the house brought that sound, so inexpressibly buoyant and cheering, to the ears of the bride with a noisy merriment that seemed like the hearty voice of an old-fashioned friend who seeks in his greeting rather cordiality

THE SISTERS.

than discretion. Before her glass stood the beautiful, the virgin, the glorious form of Madeline Lester; and Ellinor, with trembling hands (and a voice between a laugh and a cry), was braiding up her sister's rich hair, and uttering her hopes, her wishes, her congratulations. The small lattice was open, and the air came rather chillingly to the bride's bosom.

"It is a gloomy morning, dearest Nell," said she, shivering; "the winter seems about to begin at last."

"Stay, I will shut the window. The sun is struggling with the clouds at present, but I am sure it will clear up by and by. You don't, you don't leave us — the word must out — till evening."

"Don't cry!" said Madeline, half weeping herself, and sitting down, she drew Ellinor to her; and the two sisters, who had never been parted since birth, exchanged tears that were natural, though scarcely the unmixed tears of grief.

"And what pleasant evenings we shall have," said Madeline, holding her sister's hands, "in the Christmas time! You will be staying with us, you know; and that pretty old room in the north of the house Eugene has already ordered to be fitted up for you. Well, and my dear father, and dear Walter, who will be returned long ere then, will walk over to see us, and praise my housekeeping, and so forth. And then, after dinner, we will draw near the fire, — I next to Eugene, and my father, our guest, on the other side of me, with his long gray hair and his good fine face, with a tear of kind feeling in his eye, — you know that look he has whenever he is affected. And at a little distance on the other side of the hearth will be you — and Walter; I suppose we must make room for him. And Eugene, who will be then the liveliest of you all, shall read to us with his soft, clear voice, or tell us all about the birds and flowers and strange things in other countries. And then after supper we will walk half-way home across that beautiful valley — beautiful even in winter — with my father and Walter, and count the stars, and take new lessons in astronomy, and hear tales about the astrologers and the alchemists, with their fine old dreams. Ah! it will be such a happy Christmas! And then, when spring comes,

some fine morning — finer than this — when the birds are about, and the leaves getting green, and the flowers springing up every day, I shall be called in to help your toilet, as you have helped mine, and to go with you to church, though not, alas! as your bridesmaid. Ah! whom shall we have for that duty?"

"Pshaw!" said Ellinor, smiling through her tears.

While the sisters were thus engaged, and Madeline was trying, with her innocent kindness of heart, to exhilarate the spirits, so naturally depressed, of her doting sister, the sound of carriage-wheels was heard in the distance, — nearer, nearer; now the sound stopped, as at the gate; now fast, faster, — fast as the postilions could ply whip and the horses tear along. While the groups in the church-yard ran forth to gaze, and the bells rang merrily all the while, two chaises whirled by Madeline's window and stopped at the porch of the house. The sisters had flown in surprise to the casement.

"It is, it is — good God! it is Walter," cried Ellinor; "but how pale he looks!"

"And who are those strange men with him?" faltered Madeline, alarmed, though she knew not why.

CHAPTER II.

THE STUDENT ALONE IN HIS CHAMBER. — THE INTERRUPTION. — FAITHFUL LOVE.

> NEQUICQUAM thalamo graves
> Hastas . . .
> Vitabis strepitumque et celerem sequi
> Ajacem. — HORACE: *Od.* xv. lib. 1.[1]

ALONE in his favorite chamber, the instruments of science around him, and books, some of astronomical research, some of less lofty but yet abstruser lore, scattered on the tables,

[1] "In vain within your nuptial chamber will you shun the deadly spears, . . . the hostile shout, and Ajax eager in pursuit."

Eugene Aram indulged the last meditation he believed likely to absorb his thoughts before that great change of life which was to bless solitude with a companion.

"Yes," said he, pacing the apartment with folded arms, "yes, all is safe! He will not again return; the dead sleeps now without a witness. I may lay this working brain upon the bosom that loves me, and not start at night and think that the soft hand around my neck is the hangman's gripe. Back to thyself, henceforth and forever, my busy heart! Let not thy secret stir from its gloomy depth! The seal is on the tomb; henceforth be the spectre laid. Yes, I must smooth my brow, and teach my lip restraint, and smile and talk like other men. I have taken to my hearth a watch, tender, faithful, anxious,—but a watch. Farewell the unguarded hour! The soul's relief in speech, the dark and broken, yet how grateful, confidence with self, farewell! And come, thou veil! subtle, close, unvarying, the everlasting curse of entire hypocrisy, that under thee, as night, the vexed world within may sleep, and stir not! and all, in truth concealment, may seem repose!"

As he uttered these thoughts, the student paused and looked on the extended landscape that lay below. A heavy, chill, and comfortless mist sat saddening over the earth. Not a leaf stirred on the autumnal trees, but the moist damps fell slowly and with a mournful murmur upon the unwaving grass. The outline of the morning sun was visible, but it gave forth no lustre: a ring of watery and dark vapor girded the melancholy orb. Far at the entrance of the valley the wild fern showed red and faded, and the first march of the deadly winter was already heralded by that drear and silent desolation which cradles the winds and storms. But amidst this cheerless scene the distant note of the merry marriage-bell floated by, like the good spirit of the wilderness, and the student rather paused to hearken to the note than to survey the scene.

"*My* marriage-bell!" said he. "Could I, two short years back, have dreamed of this? My marriage-bell! How fondly my poor mother, when first she learned pride for her young scholar, would predict this day, and blend its festivities with

the honor and the wealth *her* son was to acquire! Alas! can we have no science to count the stars and forebode the black eclipse of the future? But peace! peace! peace! I am, I will, I shall be happy now! Memory, I defy thee!"

He uttered the last words in a deep and intense tone; and turning away as the joyful peal again broke distinctly on his ear,—

"My marriage-bell! Oh, Madeline, how wondrously beloved, how unspeakably dear thou art to me! What hast thou conquered! How many reasons for resolve, how vast an army in the Past, has thy bright and tender purity overthrown! But thou — No, never shalt *thou* repent!" And for several minutes the sole thought of the soliloquist was love. But scarce consciously to himself, a spirit, not, to all seeming, befitted to that bridal-day,— vague, restless, impressed with the dark and fluttering shadow of coming change,— had taken possession of his breast, and did not long yield the mastery to any brighter and more serene emotion.

"And why," he said, as this spirit regained its empire over him, and he paused before the "starred tubes" of his beloved science,— "and why this chill, this shiver, in the midst of hope? Can the mere breath of the seasons, the weight or lightness of the atmosphere, the outward gloom or smile of the brute mass called Nature, affect us thus? Out on this empty science, this vain knowledge, this little lore, if we are so fooled by the vile clay and the common air from our one great empire, self! Great God! hast thou made us in mercy, or in disdain? Placed in this narrow world, darkness and cloud around us; no fixed rule for men; creeds, morals, changing in every clime, and growing like herbs upon the mere soil, — we struggle to dispel the shadows; we grope around; from our own heart and our sharp and hard endurance we strike our only light. For what? To show us what dupes we are, — creatures of accident, tools of circumstance, blind instruments of the scorner Fate; the very mind, the very reason, a bound slave to the desires, the weakness of the clay; affected by a cloud, dulled by the damps of the foul marsh; stricken from power to weakness, from sense to madness, to gaping

idiocy, or delirious raving, by a putrid exhalation! A rheum, a chill, and Cæsar trembles! The world's gods, that slay or enlighten millions, poor puppets to the same rank imp which calls up the fungus or breeds the worm,—pah! How little worth is it in this life to be wise! Strange, strange, how my heart sinks. Well, the better sign, the better sign! *In danger* it never sank."

Absorbed in these reflections, Aram had not for some minutes noticed the sudden ceasing of the bell; but now, as he again paused from his irregular and abrupt pacings along the chamber, the silence struck him, and looking forth, and striving again to catch the note, he saw a little group of men, among whom he marked the erect and comely form of Rowland Lester, approaching towards the house.

"What!" he thought, "do they come for me? Is it so late? Have I played the laggard? Nay, it yet wants near an hour to the time they expected me. Well, some kindness, some attention from my good father-in-law; I must thank him for it. What! my hand trembles. How weak are these poor nerves; I must rest and recall my mind to itself!"

And indeed, whether or not from the novelty and importance of the event he was about to celebrate, or from some presentiment, occasioned, as he would fain believe, by the mournful and sudden change in the atmosphere, an embarrassment, a wavering, a fear, very unwonted to the calm and stately self-possession of Eugene Aram, made itself painfully felt throughout his frame. He sank down in his chair and strove to re-collect himself; it was an effort in which he had just succeeded, when a loud knocking was heard at the outer door; it swung open; several voices were heard. Aram sprang up, pale, breathless, his lips apart.

"Great God!" he exclaimed, clasping his hands. "'Murderer!'—was that the word I heard shouted forth? The voice, too, is Walter Lester's. Has he returned? Can he have learned—?"

To rush to the door, to throw across it a long, heavy iron bar, which would resist assaults of no common strength, was his first impulse. Thus enabled to gain time for reflection, his

active and alarmed mind ran over the whole field of expedient and conjecture. Again, "Murderer!" "Stay me not," cried Walter, from below; "*my* hand shall seize the murderer!"

Guess was now over; danger and death were marching on him. Escape,—how? whither? The height forbade the thought of flight from the casement! The door?—he heard loud steps already hurrying up the stairs; his hands clutched convulsively at his breast, where his fire-arms were generally concealed,—they were left below. He glanced one lightning glance round the room; no weapon of any kind was at hand. His brain reeled for a moment, his breath gasped, a mortal sickness passed over his heart, and then the MIND triumphed over all. He drew up to his full height, folded his arms doggedly on his breast, and muttering, "The accuser comes,—I have it still to refute the charge!" he stood prepared to meet, nor despairing to evade, the worst.

As waters close over the object which divided them, all these thoughts, these fears, and this resolution had been but the work, the agitation, and the succeeding calm of the moment; that moment was past.

"Admit us!" cried the voice of Walter Lester, knocking fiercely at the door.

"Not so fervently, boy," said Lester, laying his hand on his nephew's shoulder; "your tale is yet to be proved,—I believe it not. Treat him as innocent, I pray,—I command,—till you have shown him guilty."

"Away, uncle!" said the fiery Walter; "he is my father's murderer. God hath given justice to my hands." These words, uttered in a lower key than before, were but indistinctly heard by Aram through the massy door.

"Open, or we force our entrance!" shouted Walter again; and Aram, speaking for the first time, replied in a clear and sonorous voice, so that an angel, had one spoken, could not have more deeply impressed the heart of Rowland Lester with a conviction of the student's innocence,—

"Who knocks so rudely? What means this violence? I open my doors to my friends. Is it a friend who asks it?"

"*I* ask it," said Rowland Lester, in a trembling and agitated

voice. "There seems some dreadful mistake: come forth, Eugene, and rectify it by a word."

"Is it you, Rowland Lester? It is enough. I was but with my books, and had secured myself from intrusion. Enter."

The bar was withdrawn, the door was burst open, and even Walter Lester, even the officers of justice with him, drew back for a moment as they beheld the lofty brow, the majestic presence, the features so unutterably calm, of Eugene Aram.

"What want you, sirs?" said he, unmoved and unfaltering, though in the officers of justice he recognized faces he had known before, and in that distant town in which all that he dreaded in the past lay treasured up. At the sound of his voice the spell that for an instant had arrested the step of the avenging son melted away.

"Seize him!" he cried to the officers; "you see your prisoner."

"Hold!" cried Aram, drawing back. "By what authority is this outrage,— for what am I arrested?"

"Behold," said Walter, speaking through his teeth, "behold our warrant! You are accused of murder! Know you the name of Richard Houseman,— pause, consider,— or that of Daniel Clarke?"

Slowly Aram lifted his eyes from the warrant, and it might be seen that his face was a shade more pale, though his look did not quail, or his nerves tremble. Slowly he turned his gaze upon Walter; and then, after one moment's survey, dropped it once more on the paper.

"The name of Houseman is not unfamiliar to me," said he calmly, but with effort.

"And knew you Daniel Clarke?"

"What mean these questions?" said Aram, losing temper, and stamping violently on the ground. "Is it thus that a man, free and guiltless, is to be questioned at the behest, or rather outrage, of every lawless boy? Lead me to some authority meet for me to answer; for you, boy, my answer is contempt."

"Big words shall not save thee, murderer!" cried Walter, breaking from his uncle, who in vain endeavored to hold him,

and laying his powerful grasp upon Aram's shoulder. Livid was the glare that shot from the student's eye upon his assailer; and so fearfully did his features work and change with the passions within him that even Walter felt a strange shudder thrill through his frame.

"Gentlemen," said Aram at last, mastering his emotions, and resuming some portion of the remarkable dignity that characterized his usual bearing, as he turned towards the officers of justice, "I call upon you to discharge your duty. If this be a rightful warrant, I am *your* prisoner, but I am not *this* man's. I command your protection from him!"

Walter had already released his gripe, and said, in a muttered voice,—

"My passion misled me; violence is unworthy my solemn cause. God and Justice — not these hands — are my avengers."

"*Your* avengers!" said Aram. "What dark words are these? This warrant accuses me of the murder of one Daniel Clarke. What is he to thee?"

"Mark me, man!" said Walter, fixing his eyes on Aram's countenance. "The name of Daniel Clarke was a feigned name; the real name was Geoffrey Lester: that murdered Lester was my father, and the brother of him whose daughter, had I not come to-day, you would have called your wife!"

Aram felt, while these words were uttered, that the eyes of all in the room were on him; and perhaps that knowledge enabled him not to reveal by outward sign what must have passed within during the awful trial of that moment.

"It is a dreadful tale," he said, "if true,— dreadful to me, so nearly allied to that family. But as yet I grapple with shadows."

"What! does not your conscience now convict you?" cried Walter, staggered by the calmness of the prisoner. But here Lester, who could no longer contain himself, interposed; he put by his nephew, and rushing to Aram, fell, weeping, upon his neck.

"I do not accuse thee, Eugene, my son, my son! I feel, I know thou art innocent of this monstrous crime; some horrid delusion darkens that poor boy's sight. You, you, who would

walk aside to save a worm!" and the poor old man, overcome with his emotions, could literally say no more.

Aram looked down on Lester with a compassionate expression; and soothing him with kind words, and promises that all would be explained, gently moved from his hold, and, anxious to terminate the scene, silently motioned the officers to proceed. Struck with the calmness and dignity of his manner, and fully impressed by it with the notion of his innocence, the officers treated him with a marked respect; they did not even walk by his side, but suffered him to follow their steps. As they descended the stairs, Aram turned round to Walter, with a bitter and reproachful countenance,—

"And so, young man, your malice against me has reached even to this! Will nothing but my life content you?"

"Is the desire of execution on my father's murderer but the wish of malice?" retorted Walter; though his heart yet well-nigh misgave him as to the grounds on which his suspicion rested.

Aram smiled, as half in scorn, half through incredulity; and, shaking his head gently, moved on without further words.

The three old women, who had remained in listening astonishment at the foot of the stairs, gave way as the men descended; but the one who so long had been Aram's solitary domestic, and who, from her deafness, was still benighted and uncomprehending as to the causes of his seizure, though from that very reason her alarm was the greater and more acute, she, impatiently thrusting away the officers, and mumbling some unintelligible anathema as she did so, flung herself at the feet of a master whose quiet habits and constant kindness had endeared him to her humble and faithful heart, and exclaimed,—

"What are they doing? Have they the heart to ill-use you? O master, God bless you! God shield you! I shall never see you, who was my only friend — who was every one's friend — any more!"

Aram drew himself from her, and said, with a quivering lip to Rowland Lester,—

"If her fears are true — if — if I never more return hither, see that her old age does not starve — does not want."

Lester could not speak for sobbing, but the request was remembered. And now Aram, turning aside his proud head to conceal his emotion, beheld open the door of the room so trimly prepared for Madeline's reception: the flowers smiled upon him from their stands. "Lead on, gentlemen," he said quickly. And so Eugene Aram passed his threshold!

"Ho, ho!" muttered the old hag whose predictions in the morning had been so ominous,— "ho, ho! you 'll believe Goody Darkmans another time! Providence respects the sayings of the ould. 'T was not for nothing the rats grinned at me last night. But let 's in and have a warm glass. He, he! there will be all the strong liquors for us now; the Lord is merciful to the poor!"

As the little group proceeded through the valley, the officers first, Aram and Lester side by side, Walter, with his hand on his pistol and his eye on the prisoner, a little behind, Lester endeavored to cheer the prisoner's spirits and his own by insisting on the madness of the charge and the certainty of instant acquittal from the magistrate to whom they were bound, and who was esteemed the one both most acute and most just in the county. Aram interrupted him somewhat abruptly,—

"My friend, enough of this presently. But Madeline,— what knows she as yet?"

"Nothing; of course, we kept —"

"Exactly, exactly; you have done wisely. Why need she learn anything as yet? Say an arrest for debt, a mistake, an absence but of a day or so at most,— you understand?"

"Yes. Will you not see her, Eugene, before you go, and say this yourself?"

"I! — O God! — I! to whom this day was — No, no; save me, I implore you, from the agony of such a contrast,— an interview so mournful and unavailing. No, we must not meet! But whither go we now? Not, not, surely, through all the idle gossips of the village,— the crowd already excited to gape and stare and speculate on the —"

"No," interrupted Lester; "the carriages await us at the

farther end of the valley. I thought of that,—for the rash boy behind seems to have changed his nature. I loved—Heaven knows how I loved my brother! But before I would let suspicion thus blind reason, I would suffer inquiry to sleep forever on his fate."

"Your nephew," said Aram, "has ever wronged me. But waste not words on him; let us think only of Madeline. Will you go back at once to her,—tell her a tale to lull her apprehensions, and then follow us with haste? I am alone among enemies till you come."

Lester was about to answer, when, at a turn in the road which brought the carriage within view, they perceived two figures in white hastening towards them; and ere Aram was prepared for the surprise, Madeline had sunk pale, trembling, and all breathless on his breast.

"I could not keep her back," said Ellinor, apologetically, to her father.

"Back! and why? Am I not in my proper place?" cried Madeline, lifting her face from Aram's breast; and then, as her eyes circled the group, and rested on Aram's countenance, now no longer calm, but full of woe, of passion, of disappointed love, of anticipated despair, she rose, and gradually recoiling with a fear which struck dumb her voice, thrice attempted to speak, and thrice failed.

"But what—what is—what means this?" exclaimed Ellinor. "Why do you weep, father? Why does Eugene turn away his face? You answer not. Speak, for God's sake! These strangers,—what are they? And you, Walter, you,—why are you so pale? Why do you thus knit your brows and fold your arms! You, *you* will tell me the meaning of this dreadful silence,—this scene. Speak, cousin, dear cousin, speak!"

"Speak!" cried Madeline, finding voice at length, but in the sharp and straining tone of wild terror, in which they recognized no note of the natural music. The single word sounded rather as a shriek than an adjuration; and so piercingly it ran through the hearts of all present that the very officers, hardened as their trade had made them, felt as if

they would rather have faced death than answered that command.

A dead, long, dreary pause, and Aram broke it. "Madeline Lester," said he, "prove yourself worthy of the hour of trial. Exert yourself; arouse your heart; be prepared! You are the betrothed of one whose soul never quailed before man's angry word. Remember that, and fear not!"

"I will not, I will not, Eugene! Speak, only speak!"

"You have loved me in good report; trust me now in ill. They accuse me of a crime,—a heinous crime! At first I would not have told you the real charge. Pardon me, I wronged you,—now, know all! They accuse me, I say, of crime. Of what crime? you ask. Ay, I scarce know, so vague is the charge, so fierce the accuser; but prepare, Madeline,—it is of murder!"

Raised as her spirits had been by the haughty and earnest tone of Aram's exhortation, Madeline now, though she turned deadly pale, though the earth swam round and round, yet repressed the shriek upon her lips as those horrid words shot into her soul.

"You!—murder!—you! And who dares accuse you?"

"Behold him,—your cousin!"

Ellinor heard, turned, fixed her eyes on Walter's sullen brow and motionless attitude, and fell senseless to the earth. Not thus Madeline. As there is an exhaustion that forbids, not invites repose, so when the mind is thoroughly on the rack, the common relief to anguish is not allowed; the senses are too sharply strung, thus happily to collapse into forgetfulness; the dreadful inspiration that agony kindles, supports nature while it consumes it. Madeline passed, without a downward glance, by the lifeless body of her sister; and walking with a steady step to Walter, she laid her hand upon his arm, and fixing on his countenance that soft clear eye, which was now lit with a searching and preternatural glare, and seemed to pierce into his soul, she said,—

"Walter, do I hear aright? Am I awake? Is it you who accuse Eugene Aram,—your Madeline's betrothed husband,—Madeline, whom you once loved? Of what? Of crimes

which death alone can punish. Away! It is not you,—I know it is not. Say that I am mistaken,—that I am mad, if you will. Come, Walter, relieve me; let me not abhor the very air you breathe!"

"Will no one have mercy on me?" cried Walter, rent to the heart, and covering his face with his hands. In the fire and heat of vengeance he had not recked of this. He had only thought of justice to a father, punishment to a villain, rescue for a credulous girl. The woe, the horror he was about to inflict on all he most loved: *this* had not struck upon him with a due force till now!

"Mercy—*you* talk of mercy! I knew it could not be true!" said Madeline, trying to pluck her cousin's hand from his face; "you could not have dreamed of wrong to Eugene—and—and upon this day. Say we have erred, or that you have erred, and we will forgive and bless you even now!"

Aram had not interfered in this scene; he kept his eyes fixed on the cousins, not uninterested to see what effect Madeline's touching words might produce on his accuser. Meanwhile she continued: "Speak to me, Walter, dear Walter, speak to me! Are you, my cousin, my playfellow,—are you the one to blight our hopes, to dash our joys, to bring dread and terror into a home so lately all peace and sunshine,—your own home, your childhood's home? What have you done? What have you dared to do? Accuse *him!* Of what? Murder! Speak, speak. Murder, ha! ha!—murder! nay, not so! You would not venture to come here, you would not let me take your hand, you would not look us, your uncle, your more than sisters, in the face if you could nurse in your heart this lie,—this black, horrid lie!"

Walter withdrew his hands, and as he turned his face said,—

"Let him prove his innocence. Pray God he do! I am not his accuser, Madeline. His accusers are the bones of my dead father! Save these, Heaven alone and the revealing earth are witness against him!"

"Your father!" said Madeline, staggering back,—"my lost uncle! Nay, now I know indeed what a shadow has appalled

us all! Did you know my uncle, Eugene? Did you ever see Geoffrey Lester?"

"Never, as I believe, so help me God!" said Aram, laying his hand on his heart. "But this is idle now," as, recollecting himself, he felt that the case had gone forth from Walter's hands, and that appeal to him had become vain. "Leave us now, dearest Madeline, my beloved wife that shall be, that is! I go to disprove these charges. Perhaps I shall return to-night. Delay not my acquittal, even from doubt,—a boy's doubt. Come, sirs."

"O Eugene! Eugene!" cried Madeline, throwing herself on her knees before him, "do not order me to leave you now,—now in the hour of dread! I will not. Nay, look not so! I swear I will not! Father, dear father, come and plead for me,—say I shall go with you. I ask nothing more. Do not fear for my nerves,—cowardice is gone. I will not shame you, I will not play the woman. I know what is due to one who loves *him*. Try me, only try me. You weep, father, you shake your head. But you, Eugene,—you have not the heart to deny me? Think—think if I stayed here to count the moments till you return, my very senses would leave me. What do I ask? But to go with you, to be the first to hail your triumph! Had this happened two hours hence, you could not have said me nay,—I should have claimed the right to be with you; I now but implore the blessing. You relent, you relent; I see it!"

"O Heaven!" exclaimed Aram, rising, and clasping her to his breast, and wildly kissing her face, but with cold and trembling lips, "this is indeed a bitter hour; let me not sink beneath it. Yes, Madeline, ask your father if he consents; I hail your strengthening presence as that of an angel. I will not be the one to sever you from my side."

"You are right, Eugene," said Lester, who was supporting Ellinor, not yet recovered,—"let her go with us; it is but common kindness and common mercy."

Madeline uttered a cry of joy (joy even at such a moment!), and clung fast to Eugene's arm, as if for assurance that they were not indeed to be separated.

By this time some of Lester's servants, who had from a distance followed their young mistresses, reached the spot. To their care Lester gave the still scarce reviving Ellinor; and then, turning round with a severe countenance to Walter, said, "Come, sir, your rashness has done sufficient wrong for the present; come now, and see how soon your suspicions will end in shame."

"Justice, and blood for blood!" said Walter, sternly; but his heart felt as if it were broken. His venerable uncle's tears, Madeline's look of horror as she turned from him, Ellinor all lifeless, and he not daring to approach her,—this was *his* work! He pulled his hat over his eyes, and hastened into the carriage alone. Lester, Madeline, and Aram followed in the other vehicle; and the two officers contented themselves with mounting the box, certain the prisoner would attempt no escape.

CHAPTER III.

THE JUSTICE.—THE DEPARTURE.—THE EQUANIMITY OF THE CORPORAL IN BEARING THE MISFORTUNES OF OTHER PEOPLE.—THE EXAMINATION; ITS RESULT.—ARAM'S CONDUCT IN PRISON.—THE ELASTICITY OF OUR HUMAN NATURE.—A VISIT FROM THE EARL.—WALTER'S DETERMINATION.—MADELINE.

> BEAR me to prison, where I am committed.
>
> *Measure for Measure.*

ON arriving at Sir ——'s, a disappointment, for which, had they previously conversed with the officers, they might have been prepared, awaited them. The fact was that the justice had only indorsed the warrant sent from Yorkshire; and after a very short colloquy, in which he expressed his regret at the circumstance, his conviction that the charge would be disproved, and a few other courteous commonplaces, he gave Aram to understand that the matter now did not rest with

him, but that it was to Yorkshire that the officers were bound, and before Mr. Thornton, a magistrate of that county, that the examination was to take place. "All I can do," said the magistrate, "I have already done; but I wished for an opportunity of informing you of it. I have written to my brother justice at full length respecting your high character, and treating the habits and rectitude of your life alone as a sufficient refutation of so monstrous a charge."

For the first time a visible embarrassment came over the firm nerves of the prisoner: he seemed to look with great uneasiness at the prospect of this long and dreary journey, and for such an end. Perhaps the very notion of returning as a suspected criminal to that part of the country where a portion of his youth had been passed, was sufficient to disquiet and deject him. All this while his poor Madeline seemed actuated by a spirit beyond herself; she would not be separated from his side, she held his hand in hers, she whispered comfort and courage at the very moment when her own heart most sank. The magistrate wiped his eyes when he saw a creature so young, so beautiful, in circumstances so fearful, and bearing up with an energy so little to be expected from her years and delicate appearance. Aram said but little; he covered his face with his right hand for a few moments, as if to hide a passing emotion, a sudden weakness. When he removed it, all vestige of color had died away; his face was pale as that of one who had risen from the grave, but it was settled and composed.

"It is a hard pang, sir," said he, with a faint smile; "so many miles, so many days, so long a deferment of knowing the best or preparing to meet the worst. But be it so! I thank you, sir, I thank you all,—Lester, Madeline, for your kindness; you two must now leave me: the brand is on my name,—the suspected man is no fit object for love or friendship! Farewell!"

"We go with you!" said Madeline, firmly and in a very low voice.

Aram's eye sparkled, but he waved his hand impatiently.

"We go with you, my friend!" repeated Lester.

And so, indeed, not to dwell long on a painful scene, it was finally settled. Lester and his two daughters that evening followed Aram to the dark and fatal bourn to which he was bound.

It was in vain that Walter, seizing his uncle's hand, whispered,—

"For Heaven's sake, do not be rash in your friendship! You have not yet learned all. I tell you that there can be no doubt of his guilt! Remember, it is a brother for whom you mourn! Will you countenance his murderer?"

Lester, despite himself, was struck by the earnestness with which his nephew spoke; but the impression died away as the words ceased. So strong and deep had been the fascination which Eugene Aram had exercised over the hearts of all once drawn within the near circle of his attraction, that had the charge of murder been made against himself, Lester could not have repelled it with a more entire conviction of the innocence of the accused. Still, however, the deep sincerity of his nephew's manner in some measure served to soften his resentment towards him.

"No, no, boy!" said he, drawing away his hand; "Rowland Lester is not the one to desert a friend in the day of darkness and the hour of need. Be silent, I say! My brother, my poor brother, you tell me, has been murdered; I will see justice done to him. But Aram! Fie! fie! it is a name that would whisper falsehood to the loudest accusation. Go, Walter, go! I do not blame you,—you may be right; a murdered father is a dread and awful memory to a son! What wonder that the thought warps your judgment? But go! Eugene was to me both a guide and a blessing,—a father in wisdom, a son in love. I cannot look on his accuser's face without anguish. Go; we shall meet again. Now go!"

"Enough, sir!" said Walter, partly in anger, partly in sorrow. "Time be the judge between us all!"

With those words he turned from the house and proceeded on foot towards a cottage half-way between Grassdale and the magistrate's house, at which, previous to his return to the former place, he had prudently left the corporal, not willing

to trust to that person's discretion as to the tales and scandal that he might propagate throughout the village on a matter so painful and so dark.

Let the world wag as it will, there are some tempers which its vicissitudes never reach. Nothing makes a picture of distress more sad than the portrait of some individual sitting indifferently looking on in the background. This was a secret Hogarth knew well. Mark his death-bed scenes: Poverty and Vice worked up into horror, and the physicians in the corner wrangling for the fee; or the child playing with the coffin; or the nurse filching what fortune, harsh, yet less harsh than humanity, might have left. In the melancholy depth of humor that steeps both our fancy and our heart in the immortal romance of Cervantes (for how profoundly melancholy is it to be compelled by one gallant folly to laugh at all that is gentle and brave and wise and generous), nothing grates on us more than when — last scene of all — the poor knight lies dead, his exploits forever over, forever dumb his eloquent discourses, — than when, I say, we are told that, despite of his grief, even little Sancho did not eat or drink the less. These touches open to us the real world, it is true; but it is not the best part of it. Certain it was that when Walter, full of contending emotions at all he had witnessed, — harassed, tortured, yet also elevated by his feelings, — stopped opposite the cottage door and saw there the corporal sitting comfortably in the porch, his *vile modicum Sabini* before him, his pipe in his mouth, and a complacent expression of satisfaction diffusing itself over features which shrewdness and selfishness had marked for their own, — certain it was that at this sight Walter experienced a more displeasing revulsion of feeling, a more entire conviction of sadness, a more consummate disgust of this weary world and the motley masquers that walk therein than all the tragic scenes he had just witnessed had produced within him.

"And well, sir," said the corporal, slowly rising, "how did it go off? Was n't the villain 'bash'd to the dust? You 've nabbed him safe, I hope?"

"Silence!" said Walter, sternly; "prepare for our depar-

ture. The chaise will be here forthwith; we return to Yorkshire this day. Ask me no more now."

"A well, baugh!" said the corporal.

There was a long silence. Walter walked to and fro the road before the cottage. The chaise arrived; the luggage was put in. Walter's foot was on the step; but before the corporal mounted the rumbling dickey, that invaluable domestic hemmed thrice.

"And had you time, sir, to think of poor Jacob, and slip in a word to your uncle about the bit 'tato ground?"

We pass over the space of time, short in fact, long in suffering, that elapsed till the prisoner and his companions reached Knaresborough. Aram's conduct during this time was not only calm, but cheerful. The stoical doctrines he had affected through life he on this trying interval called into remarkable exertion. He it was who now supported the spirits of his mistress and his friend; and though he no longer pretended to be sanguine of acquittal, though again and again he urged upon them the gloomy fact, first how improbable it was that this course had been entered into against him without strong presumption of guilt, and secondly how little less improbable it was that at that distance of time he should be able to procure evidence, or remember circumstances sufficient on the instant to set aside such presumption,—he yet dwelt partly on the hope of *ultimate* proof of his innocence, and still more strongly on the firmness of his own mind to bear, without shrinking, even the hardest fate.

"Do not," he said to Lester, "do not look on these trials of life only with the eyes of the world. Reflect how poor and minute a segment, in the vast circle of eternity, existence is at the best. Its sorrow and its shame are but moments. Always in my brightest and youngest hours I have wrapped my heart in the contemplation of an august futurity,—

> "'The soul, secure in its existence, smiles
> At the drawn dagger, and defies its point.'

Were it not for Madeline's dear sake, I should long since have

been over-weary of the world. As it is, the sooner, even by a violent and unjust fate, we leave a path begirt with snares below and tempests above, the happier for that soul which looks to its lot in this earth as the least part of its appointed doom."

In discourses like this, which the nature of his eloquence was peculiarly calculated to render solemn and impressive, Aram strove to prepare his friends for the worst, and perhaps to cheat, or to steel, himself. Ever as he spoke thus, Lester or Ellinor broke on him with impatient remonstrance; but Madeline, as if imbued with a deeper and more mournful penetration into the future, listened in tearless and breathless attention. She gazed upon him with a look that shared the thought he expressed, though it read not (yet she dreamed so) the heart from which it came. In the words of that beautiful poet to whose true nature, so full of unuttered tenderness, so fraught with the rich nobility of love, we have begun slowly to awaken,—

> "*Her* lip was silent, scarcely beat *her* heart;
> *Her* eye alone proclaimed 'We will not part!'
> Thy '*hope*' may perish, or thy friends may flee;
> Farewell to life, but not adieu to thee!" [1]

They arrived at noon at the house of Mr. Thornton, and Aram underwent his examination. Though he denied most of the particulars in Houseman's evidence, and expressly the charge of murder, his commitment was made out; and that day he was removed by the officers (Barker and Moor, who had arrested him at Grassdale) to York Castle, to await his trial at the assizes.

The sensation which this extraordinary event created throughout the country was wholly unequalled. Not only in Yorkshire and the county in which he had of late resided, where his personal habits were known, but even in the metropolis, and amongst men of all classes in England, it appears to have caused one mingled feeling of astonishment, horror, and incredulity, which in our times has no parallel in any crim-

[1] Lara.

inal prosecution. The peculiar attributes of the prisoner, his genius, his learning, his moral life, the interest that by students had been for years attached to his name, his approaching marriage, the length of time that had elapsed since the crime had been committed, the singular and abrupt manner, the wild and legendary spot in which the skeleton of the lost man had been discovered, the imperfect rumors, the dark and suspicious evidence,—all combined to make a tale of such marvellous incident, and breeding such endless conjecture, that we cannot wonder to find it afterwards received a place, not only in the temporary chronicles, but even in the permanent histories of the period.

Previous to Walter's departure from Knaresborough to Grassdale, and immediately subsequent to the discovery at St. Robert's Cave, the coroner's inquest had been held upon the bones so mysteriously and suddenly brought to light. Upon the witness of the old woman at whose house Aram had lodged, and upon that of Houseman, aided by some circumstantial and less weighty evidence, had been issued that warrant on which we have seen the prisoner apprehended.

With most men there was an intimate and indignant persuasion of Aram's innocence; and at this day, in the county where he last resided, there still lingers the same belief. Firm as his gospel faith, that conviction rested in the mind of the worthy Lester; and he sought, by every means he could devise, to soothe and cheer the confinement of his friend. In prison, however (indeed, after his examination, after Aram had made himself thoroughly acquainted with all the circumstantial evidence which identified Clarke with Geoffrey Lester,—a story that till then he had persuaded himself wholly to disbelieve), a change, which in the presence of Madeline or her father he vainly attempted wholly to conceal, and to which, when alone, he surrendered himself with a gloomy abstraction, came over his mood, and dashed him from the lofty height of philosophy from which he had before looked down on the peril and the ills below.

Sometimes he would gaze on Lester with a strange and glassy eye, and mutter inaudibly to himself, as if unaware of

the old man's presence; at others he would shrink from Lester's proffered hand, and start abruptly from his professions of unaltered, unalterable regard; sometimes he would sit silently, and with a changeless and stony countenance look upon Madeline as she now spoke in that exalted tone of consolation which had passed away from himself; and when she had done, instead of replying to her speech, he would say abruptly, "Ay, at the worst you love me, then,—love me better than any one on earth. Say that, Madeline; again say that!"

And Madeline's trembling lips obeyed the demand.

"Yes," he would renew, "this man whom they accuse me of murdering, this—your uncle—him you never saw since you were an infant, a mere infant,—*him* you could not love! What was he to you? Yet it is dreadful to think of, dreadful, dreadful!" And then again his voice ceased; but his lips moved convulsively, and his eyes seemed to speak meanings that defied words. These alterations in his bearing, which belied his steady and resolute character, astonished and dejected both Madeline and her father. Sometimes they thought that his situation had shaken his reason, or that the horrible suspicion of having murdered the uncle of his intended wife made him look upon themselves with a secret shudder, and that they were mingled up in his mind by no unnatural, though unjust confusion, with the causes of his present awful and uncertain state. With the generality of the world these two tender friends believed Houseman the sole and real murderer, and fancied his charge against Aram was but the last expedient of a villain to ward punishment from himself by imputing crime to another. Naturally, then, they frequently sought to turn the conversation upon Houseman and on the different circumstances that had brought him acquainted with Aram; but on this ground the prisoner seemed morbidly sensitive, and averse to detailed discussion. His narration, however, such as it was, threw much light upon certain matters on which Madeline and Lester were before anxious and inquisitive.

"Houseman is, in all ways," said he, with great and bitter vehemence, "unredeemed, and beyond the calculations of an

ordinary wickedness; we knew each other from our relationship, but seldom met, and still more rarely held long intercourse together. After we separated, when I left Knaresborough, we did not meet for years. He sought me at Grassdale: he was poor, and implored assistance; I gave him all within my power. He sought me again,—nay, more than once again; and finding me justly averse to yielding to his extortionate demands, he then broached the purpose he has now effected. He threatened—you hear me, you understand?—he threatened me with this charge,—the murder of Daniel Clarke: by that name alone I knew the deceased. The menace and the known villany of the man agitated me beyond expression. What was I? A being who lived without the world, who knew not its ways, who desired only rest! The menace haunted me,—almost maddened! Your nephew has told you, you say, of broken words, of escaping emotions, which he has noted, even to suspicion, in me; you now behold the cause! Was it not sufficient? My life—nay, more—my fame, my marriage, Madeline's peace of mind, all depended on the uncertain fury or craft of a wretch like this! The idea was with me night and day; to avoid it I resolved on a sacrifice. You may blame me,—I was weak; yet I thought then not unwise. To avoid it, I say, I offered to bribe this man to leave the country. I sold my pittance to oblige him to it. I bound him thereto by the strongest ties. Nay, so disinterestedly, so truly did I love Madeline that I would not wed while I thought this danger could burst upon me. I believed that, before my marriage day, Houseman had left the country. It was not so; Fate ordered otherwise. It seems that Houseman came to Knaresborough to see his daughter; that suspicion, by a sudden train of events, fell on him,—perhaps justly; to screen himself he has sacrificed me. The tale seems plausible: perhaps the accuser may triumph. But, Madeline, you now may account for much that may have perplexed you before. Let me remember— Ay, ay, I have dropped mysterious words, have I not?—have I not? Owning that danger was around me, owning that a wild and terrific secret was heavy at my breast,—nay, once, walking with

you the evening before — before the fatal day, I said that we must prepare to seek some yet more secluded spot, some deeper retirement; for despite my precautions, despite the supposed absence of Houseman from the country itself, a fevered and restless presentiment would at some times intrude itself on me. All this is now accounted for, is it not, Madeline? Speak, speak!"

"All, love, all! Why do you look on me with that searching eye, that frowning brow?"

"Did I? No, no, I have no frown for you. But peace; I am not what I ought to be through this ordeal."

The above narration of Aram did indeed account to Madeline for much that had till then remained unexplained,—the appearance of Houseman at Grassdale; the meeting between him and Aram on the evening she walked with the latter and questioned him of his ill-boding visitor; the frequent abstraction and muttered hints of her lover; and, as he had said, his last declaration of the possible necessity of leaving Grassdale. Nor was it improbable, though it was rather in accordance with the unworldly habits than with the haughty character of Aram, that he should seek, circumstanced as he was, to silence even the false accuser of a plausible tale that might well strike horror and bewilderment into a man much more, to all seeming, fitted to grapple with the hard and coarse realities of life than the moody and secluded scholar. Be that as it may, though Lester deplored, he did not blame that circumstance, which, after all, had not transpired, nor seemed likely to transpire; and he attributed the prisoner's aversion to enter further on the matter to the natural dislike of so proud a man to refer to his own weakness, and to dwell upon the manner in which, in spite of that weakness, he had been duped. This story Lester retailed to Walter; and it contributed to throw a damp and uncertainty over those mixed and unquiet feelings with which the latter waited for the coming trial. There were many moments when the young man was tempted to regret that Aram had not escaped a trial which, if he were proved guilty, would forever blast the happiness of his family, and which might, notwithstanding such a verdict, leave on

Walter's own mind an impression of the prisoner's innocence, and an uneasy consciousness that he, through his investigations, had brought him to that doom.

Walter remained in Yorkshire, seeing little of his family, — of none, indeed, but Lester. It was not to be expected that Madeline would see him; and once only he caught the tearful eyes of Ellinor as she retreated from the room he entered, — and those eyes beamed kindness and pity, but something also of reproach.

Time passed slowly and witheringly on. A man of the name of Terry having been included in the suspicion, and indeed committed, it appeared that the prosecutor could not procure witnesses by the customary time, and the trial was postponed till the next assizes. As this man was, however, never brought up to trial, and appears no more, we have said nothing of him in our narrative until he thus became the instrument of a delay in the fate of Eugene Aram. Time passed on, — winter, spring, were gone; and the glory and gloss of summer were now lavished over the happy earth. In some measure the usual calmness of his demeanor had returned to Aram; he had mastered those moody fits we have referred to, which had so afflicted his affectionate visitors, and he now seemed to prepare and buoy himself up against that awful ordeal of life and death which he was about soon to pass. Yet he, the hermit of Nature, who —

> "Each little herb
> That grows on mountain bleak, or tangled forest,
> Had learnt to name," [1] —

he could not feel, even through the bars and checks of a prison, the soft summer air, "the witchery of the soft blue sky;" he could not see the leaves bud forth, and mellow into their darker verdure; he could not hear the songs of the many-voiced birds, or listen to the dancing rain, calling up beauty where it fell; or mark at night, through his high and narrow casement, the stars aloof, and the sweet moon pouring in her light, like God's pardon, even through the dungeon-gloom and

[1] Remorse, by S. T. Coleridge.

the desolate scenes where Mortality struggles with Despair, — he could not catch, obstructed as they were, these, the benigner influences of earth, and not sicken and pant for his old and full communion with their ministry and presence. Sometimes all around him was forgotten, — the harsh cell, the cheerless solitude, the approaching trial, the boding fear, the darkened hope, even the spectre of a troubled and fierce remembrance, — all was forgotten, and his spirit was abroad, and his step upon the mountain top once more.

In our estimate of the ills of life we never sufficiently take into our consideration the wonderful elasticity of our moral frame, the unlooked-for, the startling facility with which the human mind accommodates itself to all change of circumstance, making an object and even a joy from the hardest and seemingly the least redeemed conditions of fate. The man who watched the spider in his cell may have taken, at least, as much interest in the watch as when engaged in the most ardent and ambitious objects of his former life. Let any man look over his past career; let him recall, not *moments*, not *hours* of agony, — for to them Custom lends not her blessed magic, — but let him single out some *lengthened* period of physical or moral endurance: in hastily reverting to it, it may seem at first, I grant, altogether wretched, — a series of days marked with the black stone, the clouds without a star. But let him look more closely: it was not so during the time of suffering; a thousand little things, in the bustle of life dormant and unheeded, *then* started forth into notice and became to him objects of interest or diversion; the dreary present, once made familiar, glided away from him, not less than if it had been all happiness; his mind dwelt not on the dull intervals, but the stepping-stone it had created and placed at each; and by that moral dreaming which forever goes on within man's secret heart, he lived as little in the immediate world before him as in the most sanguine period of his youth, or the most scheming of his maturity.

So wonderful in equalizing all states and all times in the varying tide of life are these two rulers, yet levellers of mankind, Hope and Custom, that the very idea of an eternal pun-

ishment includes that of an utter alteration of the whole mechanism of the soul in its human state; and no effort of an imagination, assisted by past experience, can conceive a state of torture which Custom can *never* blunt, and from which the chainless and immaterial spirit can *never* be beguiled into even a momentary escape.

Among the very few persons admitted to Aram's solitude was Lord ——. That nobleman was staying, on a visit, with a relation of his in the neighborhood; and he seized, with an excited and mournful avidity, the opportunity thus afforded him of seeing once more a character that had so often forced itself on his speculation and surprise. He came to offer, not condolence, but respect,—*services* at such a moment no individual could render; he gave, however, what was within his power,—advice,—and pointed out to Aram the best counsel to engage, and the best method of previous inquiry into particulars yet unexplored. He was astonished to find Aram indifferent on these points, so important. The prisoner, it would seem, had even then resolved on being his own counsel and conducting his own cause; the event proved that he did not rely in vain on the power of his own eloquence and sagacity, though he might on their result. As to the rest, he spoke with impatience, and the petulance of a wronged man. "For the idle rumors of the world I do not care," said he; "let them condemn or acquit me as they will. For my life, I might be willing, indeed, that it were spared,—I trust it may be; if not, I can stand face to face with Death. I have now looked on him within these walls long enough to have grown familiar with his terrors. But enough of me. Tell me, my lord, something of the world without,—I have grown eager about it at last. I have been now so condemned to feed upon myself that I have become surfeited with the diet;" and it was with great difficulty that the earl drew Aram back to speak of himself. He did so, even when compelled to it, with so much qualification and reserve, mixed with some evident anger at the thought of being sifted and examined, that his visitor was forced finally to drop the subject; and not liking, indeed not able, at such a time, to converse on more indiffer-

ent themes, the last interview he ever had with Aram terminated much more abruptly than he had meant it. His opinion of the prisoner was not, however, shaken in the least. I have seen a letter of his to a celebrated personage of the day, in which, mentioning this interview, he concludes with saying: "In short, there is so much real dignity about the man that adverse circumstances increase it tenfold. Of his innocence I have not the remotest doubt; but if he persist in being his own counsel I tremble for the result; you know, in such cases, how much more valuable is practice than genius. But the judge, you will say, is in criminal causes the prisoner's counsel: God grant he may here prove a successful one! I repeat, were Aram condemned by five hundred juries, I could not believe him guilty. No, the very essence of all human probabilities is against it."

The earl afterwards saw and conversed with Walter. He was much struck with the conduct of the young Lester, and much impressed with compassion for a situation so harassing and unhappy.

"Whatever be the result of the trial," said Walter, "I shall leave the country the moment it is finally over. If the prisoner be condemned, there is no hearth for me in my uncle's home; if not, my suspicions may still remain, and the sight of each other be an equal bane to the accused and to myself. A voluntary exile and a life that may lead to forgetfulness are all that I covet. I now find in my own person," he added, with a faint smile, "how deeply Shakspeare had read the mysteries of men's conduct. Hamlet, we are told, was naturally full of fire and action. One dark discovery quells his spirit, unstrings his heart, and stales to him forever the uses of the world. I now comprehend the change. It is bodied forth even in the humblest individual who is met by a similar fate,— even in myself."

"Ay," said the earl, "I do indeed remember you a wild, impetuous, headstrong youth. I scarcely recognize your very appearance. The elastic spring has left your step, there seems a fixed furrow in your brow. These clouds of life are indeed no summer vapor, darkening one moment, and gone

the next. But, my young friend, let us hope the best. I firmly believe in Aram's innocence, firmly; more rootedly than I can express. The real criminal will appear on the trial. All bitterness between you and Aram must cease at his acquittal; you will be anxious to repair to him the injustice of a natural suspicion, and he seems not one who could long retain malice. All will be well, believe me."

"God grant it!" said Walter, sighing deeply.

"But at the worst," continued the earl, pressing his hand in parting, "if you should persist in your resolution to leave the country, write to me, and I can furnish you with an honorable and stirring occasion for doing so. Farewell!"

While time was thus advancing towards the fatal day, it was graving deep ravages within the pure breast of Madeline Lester. She had borne up, as we have seen, for some time against the sudden blow that had shivered her young hopes and separated her by so awful a chasm from the side of Aram; but as week after week, month after month rolled on, and he still lay in prison, and the horrible suspense of ignominy and death still hung over her, then gradually her courage began to fail and her heart to sink. Of all the conditions to which the heart is subject, suspense is the one that most gnaws and cankers into the frame. One little month of that suspense, when it involves death, we are told, in a very remarkable work lately published by an eye-witness,[1] is sufficient to plough fixed lines and furrows in the face of a convict of five-and-twenty,— sufficient to dash the brown hair with gray, and to bleach the gray to white. And this suspense — suspense of this nature — for more than eight whole months had Madeline to endure!

About the end of the second month, the effect upon her health grew visible. Her color, naturally delicate as the hues of the pink shell or the youngest rose, faded into one marble whiteness, which again, as time proceeded, flushed into that red and preternatural hectic which, once settled, rarely yields its place but to the colors of the grave. Her form shrank from its rounded and noble proportions. Deep

[1] See Mr. Wakefield's work On the Punishment of Death.

hollows traced themselves beneath eyes which yet grew even more lovely as they grew less serenely bright. The blessed sleep sunk not upon her brain with its wonted and healing dews. Perturbed dreams, that towards dawn succeeded the long and weary vigil of the night, shook her frame even more than the anguish of the day. In these dreams one frightful vision,—a crowd, a scaffold, and the pale, majestic face of her lover darkened by unutterable pangs of pride and sorrow, —was forever present before her. Till now she and Ellinor had always shared the same bed; this Madeline would no longer suffer. In vain Ellinor wept and pleaded.

"No," said Madeline, with a hollow voice; "at night I see him. My soul is alone with his; but—but," and she burst into an agony of tears, "the most dreadful thought is this,—I cannot master my dreams. And sometimes I start and wake, and find that in sleep I have believed him guilty. Nay, O God! that *his* lips have proclaimed the guilt! And shall any living being, shall any but God, who reads not words, but hearts, hear this hideous falsehood,—this ghastly mockery of the lying sleep? No, I must be alone! The very stars should not hear what is forced from me in the madness of my dreams."

But not in vain, or not excluded from *her*, was that elastic and consoling spirit of which I have before spoken. As Aram recovered the tenor of his self-possession, a more quiet and peaceful calm diffused itself over the mind of Madeline. Her high and starry nature could comprehend those sublime inspirations of comfort which lift us from the lowest abyss of this world to the contemplation of all that the yearning visions of mankind have painted in another. She would sit, rapt and absorbed for hours together, till these contemplations assumed the color of a gentle and soft insanity. "Come, dearest Madeline," Ellinor would say,—"come, you have thought enough; my poor father asks to see you."

"Hush!" Madeline answered. "Hush! I have been walking with Eugene in heaven. And oh! there are green woods and lulling waters above, as there are on earth, and we see the stars quite near; and I cannot tell you how happy their

smile makes those who look upon them. And Eugene never starts there, nor frowns, nor walks aside, nor looks on me with an estranged and chilling look, but his face is as calm and bright as the face of an angel. And his voice,— it thrills amidst all the music which plays there night and day, softer than their softest note. And we are married, Ellinor, at last. We were married in heaven, and all the angels came to the marriage! I am now so happy that we were not wed before! What! are you weeping, Ellinor? Ah! we never weep in heaven; but we will all go there again, all of us, hand in hand!"

These affecting hallucinations terrified them, lest they should settle into a *confirmed* loss of reason; but perhaps without cause. They never lasted long, and never occurred but after moods of abstraction of unusual duration. To her they probably supplied what sleep does to others,— a relaxation and refreshment, an escape from the consciousness of life. And, indeed, it might always be noted that after such harmless aberrations of the mind Madeline seemed more collected and patient in thought, and for the moment even stronger in frame than before. Yet the body evidently pined and languished, and each week made palpable decay in her vital powers.

Every time Aram saw her, he was startled at the alteration; and kissing her cheek, her lips, her temples, in an agony of grief, wondered that to him alone it was forbidden to weep. Yet after all, when she was gone, and he again alone, he could not but think death likely to prove to her the most happy of earthly boons. He was not sanguine of acquittal; and even in acquittal, a voice at his heart suggested insuperable barriers to their union, which had not existed when it was first anticipated.

"Yes, let her die," he would say, "let her die,— *she* at least is certain of heaven." But the human infirmity clung around him; and notwithstanding this seeming resolution in her absence, he did not mourn the less, he was not stung the less, when he saw her again, and beheld a new character from the hand of death graven upon her form. No, we may triumph

over all weakness but that of the affections! Perhaps in this dreary and haggard interval of time these two persons loved each other more purely, more strongly, more enthusiastically than they had ever done at any former period of their eventful history. Over the hardest stone, as over the softest turf, the green moss *will* force its verdure and sustain its life.

CHAPTER IV.

THE EVENING BEFORE THE TRIAL. — THE COUSINS. — THE CHANGE IN MADELINE. — THE FAMILY OF GRASSDALE MEET ONCE MORE BENEATH ONE ROOF.

> Each substance of a grief hath twenty shadows, . . .
> For Sorrow's eye, glazed with blinding tears,
> Divides one thing entire to many objects.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> [Hope] is a flatterer,
> A parasite, a keeper back of death, —
> Who gently would dissolve the bands of life,
> Which false Hope lingers in extremity. — *Richard II.*

It was the evening before the trial. Lester and his daughters lodged at a retired and solitary house in the suburbs of the town of York; and thither, from the village some miles distant in which he had chosen his own retreat, Walter now proceeded across fields laden with the ripening corn. The last and the richest month of summer had commenced; but the harvest was not yet begun, and deep and golden showed the vegetation of life, bedded among the dark verdure of the hedge-rows and the "merrie woods." The evening was serene and lulled; at a distance arose the spires and chimneys of the town, but no sound from the busy hum of men reached the ear. Nothing perhaps gives a more entire idea of stillness than the sight of those abodes where "noise dwelleth," but where you cannot now hear even its murmurs. The stillness

of a city is far more impressive than that of Nature, for the mind instantly compares the present silence with the wonted uproar. The harvest-moon rose slowly from a copse of gloomy firs, and infused its own unspeakable magic into the hush and transparency of the night. As Walter walked slowly on, the sound of voices from some rustic party going homeward broke jocundly on the silence; and when he paused for a moment at the stile from which he first caught a glimpse of Lester's house, he saw, winding along the green hedge-row, some village pair, the "lover and the maid," who could meet only at such hours, and to whom such hours were therefore especially dear. It was altogether a scene of pure and true pastoral character, and there was all around a semblance of tranquillity, of happiness, which suits with the poetical and the scriptural paintings of a pastoral life, and which, perhaps, in a new and fertile country may still find a realization. From this scene, from these thoughts, the young loiterer turned with a sigh towards the solitary house in which this night could awaken none but the most anxious feelings, and that moon could beam only on the most troubled hearts.

> "Terra salutiferas herbas, eademque nocentes
> Nutrit; et urticæ proxima sæpe rosa est."[1]

He now walked more quickly on, as if stung by his reflections; and avoiding the path which led to the front of the house, gained a little garden at the rear, and opening a gate that admitted to a narrow and shaded walk, over which the linden and nut trees made a sort of continuous and natural arbor, the moon, piercing at broken intervals through the boughs, rested on the form of Ellinor Lester.

"This is most kind, most like my own sweet cousin," said Walter, approaching; "I cannot say how fearful I was lest you should not meet me after all."

"Indeed, Walter," replied Ellinor, "I found some difficulty in concealing your note, which was given me in Madeline's presence, and still more in stealing out unobserved by her;

[1] "The same earth produces health-bearing and deadly plants; and oft times the rose grows nearest to the nettle."

for she has been, as you may well conceive, unusually restless the whole of this agonizing day. Ah, Walter, would to God you had never left us!"

"Rather say," rejoined Walter, "would that this unhappy man, against whom my father's ashes still seem to me to cry aloud, had never come into our peaceful and happy valley! Then *you* would not have reproached me that I have sought justice on a suspected murderer, nor *I* have longed for death rather than, in that justice, have inflicted such distress and horror on those whom I love the best!"

"What, Walter, you yet believe,—you are yet convinced that Eugene Aram is the real criminal?"

"Let to-morrow show," answered Walter. "But poor, poor Madeline! How does she bear up against this long suspense? You know I have not seen her for months."

"Oh, Walter," said Ellinor, weeping bitterly, "you would not know her, so dreadfully is she altered. I fear" (here sobs choked the sister's voice, so as to leave it scarcely audible) "that she is not many weeks for this world!"

"Just Heaven! is it so?" exclaimed Walter, so shocked that the tree against which he leaned, scarcely preserved him from falling to the ground, as the thousand remembrances of his first love rushed upon his heart. "And Providence singled *me* out of the whole world to strike this blow!"

Despite her own grief, Ellinor was touched and smitten by the violent emotion of her cousin; and the two young persons, lovers, though love was at this time the least perceptible feeling of their breast, mingled their emotions, and sought at least to console and cheer each other.

"It may yet be better than our fears," said Ellinor, soothingly. "Eugene may be found guiltless, and in that joy we may forget all the past."

Walter shook his head despondingly. "*Your* heart, Ellinor, was always kind to me. You now are the only one to do me justice, and to see how utterly reproachless I am for all the misery the crime of another occasions. But my uncle,—him, too, I have not seen for some time: is he well?"

"Yes, Walter, yes," said Ellinor, kindly disguising the

real truth, how much her father's vigorous frame had been bowed by his state of mind. "And I, you see," added she, with a faint attempt to smile, "I am in health at least,—the same as when, this time last year, we were all happy and full of hope."

Walter looked hard upon that face, once so vivid with the rich color and the buoyant and arch expression of liveliness and youth, now pale, subdued, and worn by the traces of constant tears; and, pressing his hand convulsively on his heart, turned away.

"But can I not see my uncle?" said he, after a pause.

"He is not at home; he has gone to the Castle," replied Ellinor.

"I shall meet him, then, on his way home," returned Walter. "But, Ellinor, there is surely no truth in a vague rumor which I heard in the town, that Madeline intends to be present at the trial to-morrow?"

"Indeed, I fear that she will. Both my father and myself have sought strongly and urgently to dissuade her, but in vain. You know, with all that gentleness, how resolute she is when her mind is once determined on any object."

"But if the verdict should be against the prisoner, in her state of health consider how terrible would be the shock! Nay, even the joy of acquittal might be equally dangerous. For Heaven's sake, do not suffer her."

"What is to be done, Walter?" said Ellinor, wringing her hands. "We cannot help it. My father has at last forbidden me to contradict the wish. Contradiction, the physician himself says, might be as fatal as concession can be. And my father adds, in a stern, calm voice which it breaks my heart to hear: 'Be still, Ellinor. If the innocent is to perish, the sooner she joins him the better: I would then have all my ties on the other side the grave!'"

"How that strange man seems to have fascinated you all!" said Walter, bitterly.

Ellinor did not answer; over her the fascination had never been to an equal degree with the rest of her family.

"Ellinor!" said Walter, who had been walking for the last

few moments to and fro with the rapid strides of a man debating with himself, and who now suddenly paused, and laid his hand on his cousin's arm,—"Ellinor! I am resolved. I must, for the quiet of my soul I must, see Madeline this night, and win her forgiveness for all I have been made the unintentional agent of Providence to bring upon her. The peace of my future life may depend on this single interview. What if Aram be condemned? And—in short, it is no matter,—I *must* see her."

"She would not hear of it, I fear," said Ellinor, in alarm. "Indeed, you cannot; you do not know her state of mind."

"Ellinor!" said Walter, doggedly, "I am resolved." And so saying, he moved towards the house.

"Well, then," said Ellinor, whose nerves had been greatly shattered by the scenes and sorrow of the last several months, "if it must be so, wait at least till I have gone in and consulted with or prepared her."

"As you will, my gentlest, kindest cousin; I know your prudence and affection. I leave you to obtain me this interview; you can, and will, I am convinced."

"Do not be sanguine, Walter. I can only promise to use my best endeavors," answered Ellinor, blushing as he kissed her hand; and, hurrying up the walk, she disappeared within the house.

Walter walked for some moments about the alley in which Ellinor had left him; but growing impatient, he at length wound through the overhanging trees, and the house stood immediately before him, the moonlight shining full on the window-panes, and sleeping in quiet shadow over the green turf in front. He approached yet nearer, and through one of the windows, by a single light in the room, he saw Ellinor leaning over a couch on which a form reclined that his heart, rather than his sight, told him was his once-adored Madeline. He stopped, and his breath heaved thick; he thought of their common home at Grassdale, of the old manor-house, of the little parlor, with the woodbine at its casement, of the group within, once so happy and light-hearted, of which he had formerly made the one most buoyant, and not least loved.

And now this strange, this desolate house, himself estranged from all once regarding him (and those broken-hearted), this night ushering what a morrow! He groaned almost aloud, and retreated once more into the shadow of the trees. In a few minutes the door at the right of the building opened, and Ellinor came forth with a quick step.

"Come in, dear Walter," said she, "Madeline has consented to see you,—nay, when I told her you were here, and desired an-interview, she paused but for one instant, and then begged me to admit you."

"God bless her!" said poor Walter, drawing his hand across his eyes, and following Ellinor to the door.

"You will find her greatly changed!" whispered Ellinor, as they gained the outer hall; "be prepared!"

Walter did not reply, save by an expressive gesture; and Ellinor led him into a room which communicated, by one of those glass doors often to be seen in the old-fashioned houses of country towns, with the one in which he had previously seen Madeline. With a noiseless step, and almost holding his breath, he followed his fair guide through this apartment, and he now stood by the couch on which Madeline still reclined. She held out her hand to him; he pressed it to his lips, without daring to look her in the face, and after a moment's pause she said,—

"So you wished to see me, Walter? It is an anxious night, this, for all of us."

"For *all*," repeated Walter, emphatically; "and for me not the least."

"We have known some sad days since we last met," renewed Madeline; and there was another and an embarrassed pause.

"Madeline, dearest Madeline!" said Walter, and at length dropping on his knee, "you whom while I was yet a boy I so fondly, passionately loved, you who yet are, who, while I live, ever will be, so inexpressibly dear to me,—say but one word to me in this uncertain and dreadful epoch of our fate; say but one word to me,—say you feel, you are conscious, that throughout these terrible events *I* have not been to blame,

I have not willingly brought this affliction upon our house; least of all upon that heart which my own would have forfeited its best blood to preserve from the slightest evil. Or if you will not do me this justice, say at least that you forgive me!"

"I forgive you, Walter! I do you justice, my cousin," replied Madeline, with energy, and raising herself on her arm. "It is long since I have felt how unreasonable it was to throw any blame upon you, the mere and passive instrument of Fate. If I have forborne to see you, it was not from an angry feeling, but from a reluctant weakness. God bless and preserve you, my dear cousin! I know that your own heart has bled as profusely as ours; and it was but this day that I told my father, if we never met again, to express to you some kind message as a last memorial from me. Don't weep, Walter! It is a fearful thing to see *men* weep! It is only once that I have seen *him* weep,—that was long, long ago! He has no tears in the hour of dread and danger. But no matter; this is a bad world, Walter, and I am tired of it. Are not you? Why do you look so at me, Ellinor? I am not mad. Has she told you that I am, Walter? Don't believe her. Look at me! I am calm and collected! Yet tomorrow is— O God! O God! if—if—"

Madeline covered her face with her hands, and became suddenly silent, though only for a short time; when she again lifted up her eyes, they encountered those of Walter, as through those blinding and agonized tears which are wrung from the grief of manhood he gazed upon that face on which nothing of herself, save the divine and unearthly expression which had always characterized her loveliness, was left.

"Yes, Walter, I am wearing fast away,—fast beyond the power of chance! Thank God, who tempers the wind to the shorn lamb, if the worst happen, *we* cannot be divided long! Ere another Sabbath has passed, I may be with him in Paradise. What cause shall we then have for regret?"

Ellinor flung herself on her sister's neck, sobbing violently. "Yes, we shall regret you are not with us, Ellinor; but you will also soon grow tired of the world. It is a sad place, it

is a wicked place, it is full of snares and pitfalls. In our walk to-day lies our destruction for to-morrow! You will find this soon, Ellinor! And you, and my father, and Walter too, shall join us! Hark! the clock strikes. By this time to-morrow night, what triumph! — or, to me, at least [sinking her voice into a whisper that thrilled through the very bones of her listeners], what peace!"

Happily for all parties, this distressing scene was here interrupted. Lester entered the room with the heavy step into which his once elastic and cheerful tread had subsided.

"Ha, Walter!" said he, irresolutely glancing over the group; but Madeline had already sprung from her seat.

"You have seen him, you have seen him! And how does he — how does he look? But that I know; I know his brave heart does not sink. And what message does he send to me? And — and — tell me all, my father; quick, quick!"

"Dear, miserable child! and miserable old man!" muttered Lester, folding her in his arms. "But we ought to take courage and comfort from him, Madeline. A hero on the eve of battle could not be more firm, even more cheerful. He smiled often, his old smile; and he only left tears and anxieties to us. But of you, Madeline, we spoke mostly; he would scarcely let me say a word on anything else. Oh, what a kind heart, what a noble spirit! And perhaps a chance to-morrow may quench both. But God, be just, and let the avenging lightning fall on the real criminal, and not blast the innocent man!"

"Amen!" said Madeline, deeply.

"Amen!" repeated Walter, laying his hand on his heart.

"Let us pray!" exclaimed Lester, animated by a sudden impulse, and falling on his knees. The whole group followed his example; and Lester, in a trembling and impassioned voice, poured forth an extempore prayer that justice might fall only where it was due. Never did that majestic and pausing moon, which filled the lowly room as with the presence of a spirit, witness a more impressive adjuration or a audience more absorbed and rapt. Full streamed its holy rays upon the now snowy locks and upward countenance of Lester,

making his venerable person more striking from the contrast it afforded to the dark and sunburnt cheek, the energetic features, and chivalric and earnest head of the young man beside him. Just in the shadow, the raven locks of Ellinor were bowed over her clasped hands, nothing of her face visible, the graceful neck and heaving breast alone distinguished from the shadow; and hushed in a death-like and solemn repose, the parted lips moving inaudibly, the eye fixed on vacancy, the wan, transparent hands crossed upon her bosom, the light shone with a more softened and tender ray upon the faded but all-angelic form and countenance of *her* for whom Heaven was already preparing its eternal recompense for the ills of earth.

CHAPTER V.

THE TRIAL.

EQUAL to either fortune. — *Speech of Eugene Aram.*

A THOUGHT comes over us sometimes, in our career of pleasure or the troubled exultation of our ambitious pursuits,—a thought comes over us, like a cloud, that around us and about us Death, Shame, Crime, Despair, are busy at their work. I have read somewhere of an enchanted land where the inmates walked along voluptuous gardens, and built palaces, and heard music, and made merry; while around and within the land were deep caverns, where the gnomes and the fiends dwelt, and ever and anon their groans and laughter, and the sounds of their unutterable toils or ghastly revels, travelled to the upper air, mixing in an awful strangeness with the summer festivity and buoyant occupation of those above. And this is the picture of human life! These reflections of the maddening disparities of the world are dark, but salutary,—

"They wrap our thoughts at banquets in the shroud;"[1]

but we are seldom sadder without being also wiser men.

The 3d of August, 1759, rose bright, calm, and clear,—it was the morning of the trial; and when Ellinor stole into her sister's room she found Madeline sitting before the glass, and braiding her rich locks with an evident attention and care.

"I wish," said she, "that you had pleased me by dressing as for a holiday. See, I am going to wear the dress I was to have been married in."

Ellinor shuddered; for what is more appalling than to find the signs of gayety accompanying the reality of anguish?

"Yes," continued Madeline, with a smile of inexpressible sweetness, "a little reflection will convince you that this day ought not to be one of mourning. It was *the suspense* that has so worn out our hearts. If he is acquitted, as we all believe and trust, think how appropriate will be the outward seeming of our joy! If not, why I shall go before him to our marriage home and in marriage garments. Ay," she added, after a moment's pause, and with a much more grave, settled, and intense expression of voice and countenance,—"ay, do you remember how Eugene once told us that if we went at noon-day to the bottom of a deep pit,[1] we should be able to see the stars, which on the level ground are invisible? Even so, from the depths of grief—worn, wretched, seared, and dying—the blessed apparitions and tokens of heaven make themselves visible to our eyes. And I know, I have seen, I feel here," pressing her hand on her heart, "that my course is run; a few sands only are left in the glass,—let us waste them bravely. Stay, Ellinor! You see these poor withered rose-leaves: Eugene gave them to me the day before—before that fixed for our marriage. I shall wear them to-day as I would have worn them on the wedding-day. When he gathered the poor flower, how fresh it was! and I kissed off the dew: *now* see it! But come, come,—this is trifling; we must not be late. Help me, Nell, help me; come, bustle, quick, quick! Nay, be not so slovenly; I told you I would be dressed with care to-day."

[1] The remark is in Aristotle. Buffon quotes it, with his usual adroit felicity, in, I think, the first volume of his great work.

And when Madeline *was* dressed, though the robe sat loose and in large folds over her shrunken form, yet as she stood erect, and looked, with a smile that saddened Ellinor more than tears, at her image in the glass, perhaps her beauty never seemed of a more striking and lofty character,—she looked indeed a bride, but the bride of no earthly nuptials. Presently they heard an irresolute and trembling step at the door, and Lester, knocking, asked if they were prepared.

"Come in, father," said Madeline, in a calm and even cheerful voice; and the old man entered.

He cast a silent glance over Madeline's white dress, and then at his own, which was deep mourning; the glance said volumes, and its meaning was not marred by words from any one of the three.

"Yes, father," said Madeline, breaking the pause, "we are all ready. Is the carriage here?"

"It is at the door, my child."

"Come then, Ellinor, come!" and leaning on her arm, Madeline walked towards the door. When she got to the threshold, she paused, and looked round the room.

"What is it you want?" asked Ellinor.

"I was but bidding all here farewell," replied Madeline, in a soft and touching voice. "And now before we leave the house, father, sister, one word with you. You have *ever* been very, very kind to me, and most of all in this bitter trial, when I must have taxed your patience sadly,—for I know all is not right here [touching her forehead]: I cannot go forth this day without thanking you. Ellinor, my dearest friend, my fondest sister, my playmate in gladness, my comforter in grief, my nurse in sickness, since we were little children we have talked together and laughed together and wept together; and though we knew all the thoughts of each other, we have never known one thought that we would have concealed from God. And now we are going to part— Do not stop me; it must be so, I know it. But after a little while may you be happy again,—not so buoyant as you have been, that can never be, but still happy! You are formed for love and home, and for those ties you once thought would be mine. God

grant that *I* may have suffered for us both, and that when we meet hereafter you may tell me *you* have been happy here!

"But you, father," added Madeline, tearing herself from the neck of her weeping sister, and sinking on her knees before Lester, who leaned against the wall convulsed with his emotions and covering his face with his hands,—"but you, what can I say to *you?* You, who have never, no, not in my first childhood, said one harsh word to me; who have sunk all a father's authority in a father's love,—how can I say all that I feel for you,—the grateful, overflowing (painful, yet oh, how sweet!) remembrances which crowd around and suffocate me now? The time will come when Ellinor and Ellinor's children must be all in all to you; when of your poor Madeline nothing will be left but a memory: but they, they will watch on you and tend you, and protect your gray hairs from sorrow, as I might once have hoped I also was fated to do."

"My child, my child, you break my heart!" faltered forth at last the poor old man, who till now had in vain endeavored to speak.

"Give me your blessing, dear father," said Madeline, herself overcome by her feelings; "put your hand on my head and bless me, and say that if I have ever unconsciously given you a moment's pain, I am forgiven!"

"Forgiven!" repeated Lester, raising his daughter with weak and trembling arms as his tears fell fast upon her cheek, —"never did I feel what an angel had sat beside my hearth till now! But be comforted, be cheered. What if Heaven hall reserved its crowning mercy till this day, and Eugene be amongst us, free, acquitted, triumphant, before the night!"

"Ha!" said Madeline, as if suddenly roused by the thought into new life, "ha! let us hasten to find your words true. Yes, yes, if it should be so, if it should! And," added she, in a hollow voice (the enthusiasm checked), "if it were not foi my dreams, I might believe it would be so; but— Come, I am ready now."

The carriage went slowly through the crowd that the fame of the approaching trial had gathered along the streets; but the blinds were drawn down, and the father and daughter es-

caped that worst of tortures, the curious gaze of strangers on distress. Places had been kept for them in court; and as they left the carriage and entered the fatal spot, the venerable figure of Lester and the trembling and veiled forms that clung to him arrested all eyes. They at length gained their seats, and it was not long before a bustle in the court drew off attention from them. A buzz, a murmur, a movement, a dread pause. Houseman was first arraigned on his former indictment, acquitted, and admitted evidence against Aram, who was thereupon arraigned. The prisoner stood at the bar. Madeline gasped for breath, and clung, with a convulsive motion, to her sister's arm. But presently, with a long sigh, she recovered her self-possession, and sat quiet and silent, fixing her eyes upon Aram's countenance; and the aspect of that countenance was well calculated to sustain her courage and to mingle a sort of exulting pride with all the strained and fearful acuteness of her sympathy. Something, indeed, of what he had suffered was visible in the prisoner's features,—the lines around the mouth, in which mental anxiety generally the most deeply writes its traces, were grown marked and furrowed; gray hairs were here and there scattered amongst the rich and long luxuriance of his dark-brown locks; and as, before his imprisonment, he had seemed considerably younger than he was, so now time had atoned for its past delay, and he might have appeared to have told more years than had really gone over his head: but the remarkable light and beauty of his eye was undimmed as ever, and still the broad expanse of his forehead retained its unwrinkled surface and striking expression of calmness and majesty. High, self-collected, serene, and undaunted, he looked upon the crowd, the scene, the judge, before and around him; and even on those who believed him guilty, that involuntary and irresistible respect which moral firmness always produces on the mind, forced an unwilling interest in his fate, and even a reluctant hope of his acquittal.

Houseman was called upon. No one could regard his face without a certain mistrust and inward shudder. In men prone to cruelty, it has generally been remarked that there is

an animal expression strongly prevalent in the countenance. The murderer and the lustful man are often alike in the physical structure. The bull-throat, the thick lips, the receding forehead, the fierce, restless eye, which some one or other says reminds you of the buffalo in the instant before he becomes dangerous, are the outward tokens of the natural animal unsoftened, unenlightened, unredeemed, consulting only the immediate desires of his nature, whatever be the passion (lust or revenge) to which they prompt. And this animal expression, the witness of his character, was especially stamped upon Houseman's rugged and harsh features,—rendered, if possible, still more remarkable at that time by a mixture of sullenness and timidity. The conviction that his own life was saved, could not prevent remorse at his treachery in accusing his comrade,—a confused principle of honor of which villains are the most susceptible when every other honest sentiment has deserted them.

With a low, choked, and sometimes a faltering tone, Houseman deposed that in the night between the 7th and 8th of February, 1744–5, some time before eleven o'clock, he went to Aram's house; that they conversed on different matters; that he stayed there about an hour; that some three hours afterwards he passed, in company with Clarke, by Aram's house, and Aram was outside the door, as if he were about to return home; that Aram invited them both to come in; that they did so; that Clarke, who intended to leave the town before daybreak, in order, it was acknowledged, to make secretly away with certain property in his possession, was about to quit the house, when Aram proposed to accompany him out of the town; that he (Aram) and Houseman then went forth with Clarke; that when they came into the field where St. Robert's Cave is, Aram and Clarke went into it, over the hedge, and when they came within six or eight yards of the cave, he saw them quarrelling; that he saw Aram strike Clarke several times, upon which Clarke fell, and he never saw him rise again; that he saw no instrument Aram had, and knew not that he had any; that upon this, without any interposition or alarm, he left them and returned home; that

the next morning he went to Aram's house, and asked what business he had with Clarke last night, and what he had done with him? Aram replied not to this question, but threatened him if he spoke of his being in Clarke's company that night; vowing revenge, either by himself or some other person, if he mentioned anything relating to the affair. This was the sum of Houseman's evidence.

A Mr. Beckwith was next called, who deposed that Aram's garden had been searched, owing to a vague suspicion that he might have been an accomplice in the frauds of Clarke; that some parts of clothing, and also some pieces of cambric which he had sold to Clarke a little while before, were found there.

The third witness was the watchman, Thomas Barnet, who deposed that before midnight (it might be a little after eleven) he saw a person come out from Aram's house, who had a wide coat on, with the cape about his head, and seemed to shun him; whereupon he went up to him and put by the cape of his great-coat, and perceived it to be Richard Houseman. He contented himself with wishing him good night.

The officers who executed the warrant then gave their evidence as to the arrest, and dwelt on some expressions dropped by Aram before he arrived at Knaresborough, which however were felt to be wholly unimportant.

After this evidence there was a short pause, and then a shiver; that recoil and tremor which men feel at any exposition of the relics of the dead ran through the court: for the next witness was mute,—it was the skull of the deceased. On the left side there was a fracture, that from the nature of it seemed as if it could only have been made by the stroke of some blunt instrument. The piece was broken, and could not be replaced but from within.

The surgeon, Mr. Locock, who produced it, gave it as his opinion that no such breach could proceed from natural decay; that it was not a recent fracture, by the instrument with which it was dug up, but seemed to be of many years' standing.

This made the chief part of the evidence against Aram; the minor points we have omitted, and also such as, like that of

Aram's hostess, would merely have repeated what the reader knew before.

And now closed the criminatory evidence; and now the prisoner was asked the thrilling and awful question, What he had to say in his own behalf? Till now, Aram had not changed his posture or his countenance; his dark and piercing eye had for one instant fixed on each witness that appeared against him, and then dropped its gaze upon the ground. But at this moment a faint hectic flushed his cheek, and he seemed to gather and knit himself up for defence. He glanced round the court as if to see what had been the impression created against him. His eye rested on the gray locks of Rowland Lester, who, looking down, had covered his face with his hands. But beside that venerable form was the still and marble face of Madeline; and even at that distance from him, Aram perceived how intent was the hushed suspense of her emotions. But when she caught his eye,—that eye which, even at such a moment, beamed unutterable love, pity, regret for her,—a wild, a convulsive smile of encouragement, of anticipated triumph, broke the repose of her colorless features, and suddenly dying away, left her lips apart, in that expression which the great masters of old, faithful to nature, give alike to the struggle of hope and the pause of terror.

"My lord," began Aram, in that remarkable defence still extant, and still considered as wholly unequalled from the lips of one defending his own cause,—"my lord, I know not whether it is of right, or through some indulgence of your lordship, that I am allowed the liberty at this bar, and at this time, to attempt a defence, incapable and uninstructed as I am to speak. Since, while I see so many eyes upon me, so numerous and awful a concourse, fixed with attention, and filled with I know not what expectancy, I labor, not with guilt, my lord, but with perplexity. For having never seen a court but this, being wholly unacquainted with law, the customs of the bar, and all judiciary proceedings, I fear I shall be so little capable of speaking with propriety that it might reasonably be expected to exceed my hope should I be able to speak at all.

"I have heard, my lord, the indictment read, wherein I find myself charged with the highest of human crimes. You will grant me, then, your patience if I, single and unskilful, destitute of friends and unassisted by counsel, attempt something, perhaps, like argument, in my defence. What I have to say will be but short, and that brevity may be the best part of it.

"My lord, the tenor of my life contradicts this indictment. Who can look back over what is known of my former years and charge me with one vice, one offence? No! I concerted not schemes of fraud, projected no violence, injured no man's property or person. My days were honestly laborious, my nights intensely studious. This egotism is not presumptuous, is not unreasonable. What man, after a temperate use of life, a series of thinking and acting regularly, without one single deviation from a sober and even tenor of conduct, ever plunged into the depth of crime precipitately and at once? Mankind are not instantaneously corrupted. Villany is always progressive. We decline from right not suddenly, but step after step.

"If my life in general contradicts the indictment, my health, at that time in particular, contradicts it more. A little time before, I had been confined to my bed; I had suffered under a long and severe disorder. The distemper left me but slowly, and in part. So far from being well at the time I am charged with this fact, I never, to this day, perfectly recovered. Could a person in this condition execute violence against another? — I, feeble and valetudinary, with no inducement to engage, no ability to accomplish, no weapon wherewith to perpetrate such a fact,— without interest, without power, without motives, without means!

"My lord, Clarke disappeared,— true; but is that a proof of his death? The fallibility of all conclusions of such a sort, from such a circumstance, is too obvious to require instances. One instance is before you; this very castle affords it.

"In June, 1757, William Thompson, amidst all the vigilance of this place, in open daylight and double-ironed, made his escape. Notwithstanding an immediate inquiry set on foot, notwithstanding all advertisements, all search, he was never

seen or heard of since. If this man escaped unseen, through all these difficulties, how easy for Clarke, whom no difficulties opposed! Yet what would be thought of a prosecution commenced against any one seen last with Thompson?

"These bones are discovered! Where? Of all places in the world, can we think of any one, except, indeed, the church-yard, where there is so great a certainty of finding human bones as a hermitage? In time past the hermitage was a place, not only of religious retirement, but of burial. And it has scarce, or never, been heard of but that every cell now known contains or contained these relics of humanity, some mutilated, some entire. Give me leave to remind your lordship that here sat SOLITARY SANCTITY, and here the hermit and the anchorite hoped that repose for their bones when dead they here enjoyed when living. I glance over a few of the many evidences that these cells were used as repositories of the dead, and enumerate a few of the many caves similar in origin to St. Robert's, in which human bones have been found." Here the prisoner instanced, with remarkable felicity, several places in which bones had been found, under circumstances and in spots analogous to those in point.[1] And the reader who will remember that it is the great principle of the law that no man can be condemned for murder unless the remains of the deceased be found, will perceive at once how important this point was to the prisoner's defence. After concluding his instances with two facts of skeletons found in fields in the vicinity of Knaresborough, he burst forth,—

"Is, then, the invention of those bones forgotten, or industriously concealed, that the discovery of these in question may appear the more extraordinary? Extraordinary, yet how common an event! Every place conceals such remains. In fields, in hills, in highway sides, on wastes, on commons, lie frequent and unsuspected bones. And mark,—no example, perhaps, occurs of more than one skeleton being found in one cell. Here you find but one, agreeable to the peculiarity of every known cell in Britain. Had *two* skeletons been discovered, then alone might the fact have seemed suspicious and

[1] See his published defence.

uncommon. What! Have we forgotten how difficult, as in the case of Perkin Warbeck and Lambert Symnell, it has been sometimes to identify the living, and shall we now assign personality to bones,—bones which may belong to either sex? How know you that this is even the skeleton of a man? But another skeleton was discovered by some laborer: was not that skeleton averred to be Clarke's, full as confidently as this?

"My lord, my lord, must some of the living be made answerable for all the bones that earth has concealed and chance exposed? The skull that has been produced has been declared fractured. But who can surely tell whether it was the cause or the consequence of death? In May, 1732, the remains of William Lord Archbishop of this province were taken up by permission in their cathedral: the bones of the skull were found broken, as these are; yet *he* died by no violence, by no blow that could have caused that fracture. Let it be considered how easily the fracture on the skull is accounted for. At the dissolution of the religious houses the ravages of the times affected both the living and the dead. In search after imaginary treasures, coffins were broken, graves and vaults dug open, monuments ransacked, shrines demolished; Parliament itself was called in to restrain these violations. And now, are the depredations, the iniquities, of those times to be visited on this? But here, above all, was a castle vigorously besieged; every spot around was the scene of a sally, a conflict, a flight, a pursuit. Where the slaughtered fell, there were they buried. What place is not burial-earth in war? How many bones must still remain in the vicinity of that siege, for futurity to discover! Can you, then, with so many probable circumstances, choose the one least probable? Can you impute to the living what zeal in its fury may have done; what nature may have taken off and piety interred; or what war alone may have destroyed, alone deposited?

"And now glance over the circumstantial evidence,—how weak, how frail! I almost scorn to *allude* to it. I will not condescend to *dwell* upon it. The witness of one man,—arraigned himself! Is there no chance that, to save his own

life, he might conspire against mine; no chance that he might have committed this murder, *if* murder hath indeed been done; that conscience betrayed to his first exclamation; that craft suggested his throwing that guilt on me, to the knowledge of which he had unwittingly confessed? He declares that he saw me strike Clarke, that he saw him fall; yet he utters no cry, no reproof. He calls for no aid; he returns quietly home; he declares that he knows not what became of the body, yet he tells where the body is laid. He declares that he went straight home, and alone; yet the woman with whom I lodged deposes that Houseman and I returned to my house in company together. What evidence is this, and from whom does it come? Ask yourselves. As for the rest of the evidence, what does it amount to? The watchman sees Houseman leave my house at night. What more probable, but what less connected with the murder, real or supposed, of Clarke? Some pieces of clothing are found buried in my garden: but how can it be shown that they belonged to Clarke? Who can swear to, who can prove anything so vague? And if found there, even if belonging to Clarke, what proof that they were there deposited by me? How likely that the real criminal may, in the dead of night, have preferred any spot rather than that round his own home, to conceal the evidence of his crime?

"How impotent such evidence as this, and how poor, how precarious, even the strongest of mere circumstantial evidence invariably is! Let it rise to probability, to the strongest degree of probability, it is but probability still. Recollect the case of the two Harrisons, recorded by Dr. Howell: both suffered on circumstantial evidence on account of the disappearance of a man, who, like Clarke, contracted debts, borrowed money, and went off unseen. And this man returned several years after their execution. Why remind you of Jacques du Moulin, in the reign of Charles the Second; why of the unhappy Coleman, convicted, though afterwards found innocent, and whose children perished for want because the world believed the father guilty? Why should I mention the perjury of Smith, who, admitted king's evidence, screened himself by accusing Fainloth and Loveday of the murder of Dunn? The

first was executed, the second was about to share the same fate, when the perjury of Smith was incontrovertibly proved.

"And now, my lord, having endeavored to show that the whole of this charge is altogether repugnant to every part of my life; that it is inconsistent with my condition of health about that time; that no rational inference of the death of a person can be drawn from his disappearance; that hermitages were the constant repositories of the bones of the recluse; that the proofs of these are well authenticated; that the revolution in religion or the fortunes of war have mangled or buried the dead; that the strongest circumstantial evidence is often lamentably fallacious; that in my case that evidence, so far from being strong, is weak, disconnected, contradictory, — what remains? A conclusion perhaps no less reasonably than impatiently wished for. I at last, after nearly a year's confinement, equal to either fortune, intrust myself to the candor, the justice, the humanity of your lordship, and to yours, my countrymen, gentlemen of the jury."

The prisoner ceased; and the painful and choking sensations of sympathy, compassion, regret, admiration, all uniting, all mellowing into one fearful hope for his acquittal, made themselves felt through the crowded court.

In two persons only an uneasy sentiment remained, — a sentiment that the prisoner had not completed that which they would have asked from him. The one was Lester. He had expected a more warm, a more earnest, though perhaps a less ingenious and artful, defence. He had expected Aram to dwell far more on the improbable and contradictory evidence of Houseman; and above all, to have explained away all that was still left unaccounted for in his acquaintance with Clarke (as we will still call the deceased), and the allegation that he had gone out with him on the fatal night of the disappearance of the latter. At every word of the prisoner's defence he had waited almost breathlessly, in the hope that the next sentence would begin an explanation or denial on this point; and when Aram ceased, a chill, a depression, a disappointment, remained vaguely on his mind. Yet so lightly and so haughtily had Aram approached and glanced over the immediate evidence of

the witnesses against him that his silence here might have been but the natural result of a disdain that belonged essentially to his calm and proud character. The other person we referred to, and whom his defence had not impressed with a belief in its truth equal to an admiration for its skill, was one far more important in deciding the prisoner's fate,—it was the judge!

But Madeline—alas, alas! how sanguine is a woman's heart when the innocence, the fate, of the one she loves is concerned! A radiant flush broke over a face so colorless before; and with a joyous look, a kindled eye, a lofty brow, she turned to Ellinor, pressed her hand in silence, and once more gave up her whole soul to the dread procedure of the court.

The judge now began. It is greatly to be regretted that we have no minute and detailed memorial of the trial, except only the prisoner's defence. The summing up of the judge was considered at that time scarcely less remarkable than the speech of the prisoner. He stated the evidence with peculiar care and at great length to the jury. He observed how the testimony of the other deponents confirmed that of Houseman; and then, touching on the contradictory parts of the latter, he made them understand how natural, how inevitable, was some such contradiction in a witness who had not only to give evidence against another, but to refrain from criminating himself. There could be no doubt but that Houseman was an accomplice in the crime; and all therefore that seemed improbable in his giving no alarm when the deed was done, etc., was easily rendered natural and reconcilable with the other parts of his evidence. Commenting then on the defence of the prisoner (who, as if disdaining to rely on aught save his own genius or his own innocence, had called no witnesses, as he had employed no counsel), and eulogizing its eloquence and art till he destroyed their effect, by guarding the jury against that impression which eloquence and art produce in defiance of simple fact, he contended that Aram had yet alleged nothing to invalidate the positive evidence against him.

I have often heard, from men accustomed to courts of law, that nothing is more marvellous than the sudden change in

the mind of a jury which the summing up of the judge can produce; and in the present instance it was like magic. That fatal look of a common intelligence, of a common assent, was exchanged among the doomers of the prisoner's life and death as the judge concluded.

. . . . . .

They found the prisoner guilty.

. . . . . .

The judge drew on the black cap.

. . . . . .

Aram received his sentence in profound composure. Before he left the bar he drew himself up to his full height, and looked slowly around the court with that thrilling and almost sublime unmovedness of aspect which belonged to him alone of all men, and which was rendered yet more impressive by a smile — slight, but eloquent beyond all words — of a soul collected in itself. No forced and convulsive effort vainly masking the terror or the pang, no mockery of self that would mimic contempt for others, but more in majesty than bitterness; rather as daring fate than defying the judgment of others, — rather as if he wrapped himself in the independence of a quiet, than the disdain of a despairing, heart.

CHAPTER VI.

THE DEATH. — THE PRISON. — AN INTERVIEW. — ITS RESULT.

> . . . Lay her i' the earth:
> And from her fair and unpolluted flesh
> May violets spring!
> . . . . . .
> Sir, in my heart there was a kind of fighting,
> That would not let me sleep. — *Hamlet.*

"Bear with me a little longer," said Madeline; "I shall be well, quite well, presently."

Ellinor let down the carriage window to admit the air; and she took the occasion to tell the coachman to drive faster.

There was that change in Madeline's voice which alarmed her.

"How noble was his look! you saw him smile!" continued Madeline, talking to herself. "And they will murder him after all! Let me see: this day week,—ay, ere this day week we shall meet again."

"Faster; for God's sake, Ellinor, tell them to drive faster!" cried Lester, as he felt the form that leaned on his bosom wax heavier and heavier. They sped on; the house was in sight, that lonely and cheerless house,—not their sweet home at Grassdale, with the ivy round its porch and the quiet church behind. The sun was setting slowly, and Ellinor drew the blind to shade the glare from her sister's eye.

Madeline felt the kindness, and smiled. Ellinor wiped her eyes and tried to smile again. The carriage stopped, and Madeline was lifted out; she stood, supported by her father and Ellinor, for a moment on the threshold. She looked on the golden sun and the gentle earth, and the little motes dancing in the western ray; all was steeped in quiet, and full of the peace and tranquillity of the pastoral life. "No, no," she muttered, grasping her father's hand. "How is this? This is not *his* hand! Ah, no, no; I am not with him! Father," she added, in a louder and deeper voice, rising from his breast, and standing alone and unaided, "Father, bury this little packet with me,—they are his letters; do not break the seal,—and—and tell him that I never felt how deeply I —loved him—till all—the world—had—deserted him!"

She uttered a faint cry of pain, and fell at once to the ground; she lived a few hours longer, but never made speech or sign, or evinced token of life but its breath, which died at last gradually, imperceptibly, away.

On the following evening Walter obtained entrance to Aram's cell: that morning the prisoner had seen Lester; that morning he had heard of Madeline's death. He had shed no tear; he had, in the affecting language of Scripture, "turned his face to the wall;" none had seen his emotions: yet Lester felt in that bitter interview that his daughter was duly mourned.

Aram did not lift his eyes when Walter was admitted, and the young man stood almost at his knee before he perceived him. Aram then looked up, and they gazed on each other for a moment, but without speaking, till Walter said in a hollow voice,—

"Eugene Aram!"

"Ay!"

"Madeline Lester is no more."

"I have heard it! I am reconciled. Better now than later."

"Aram!" said Walter, in a tone trembling with emotion, and passionately clasping his hands, "I entreat, I implore you, at this awful time, if it be within your power to lift from my heart a load that weighs it to the dust, that, if left there, will make me through life a crushed and miserable man,—I implore you, in the name of common humanity, by your hopes of heaven, to remove it! The time now has irrevocably passed when your denial or your confession could alter your doom; your days are numbered; there is no hope of reprieve: I implore you, then, if you were led—I will not ask how, or wherefore—to the execution of the crime for the charge of which you die, to say, to whisper, to me but one word of confession, and I, the sole child of the murdered man, will forgive you from the bottom of my soul."

Walter paused, unable to proceed.

Aram's brow worked; he turned aside; he made no answer; his head dropped on his bosom, and his eyes were unmovedly fixed on the earth.

"Reflect," continued Walter, recovering himself, "reflect! I have been the involuntary instrument in bringing you to this awful fate, in destroying the happiness of my own house, in—in—in breaking the heart of the woman whom I adored even as a boy. If you be innocent, what a dreadful remembrance is left to me! Be merciful, Aram, be merciful! and if this deed was done by your hand, say to me but one word to remove the terrible uncertainty that now harrows up my being. What now is earth, is man, is opinion, to you? God only now can judge you. The eye of God reads your heart while I speak; and in the awful hour when eternity opens to

you, if the guilt has been indeed committed, think, oh! think how much lighter will be your offence if, by vanquishing the stubborn heart, you can relieve a human being from a doubt that otherwise will make the curse, the horror of an existence. Aram, Aram, if the father's death came from you, shall the life of the son be made a burden to him through you also?"

"What would you have of me? Speak!" said Aram, but without lifting his face from his breast.

"Much of your nature belies this crime. You are wise, calm, beneficent to the distressed. Revenge, passion, nay, the sharp pangs of hunger, may have urged you to one criminal deed; but your soul is not wholly hardened,—nay, I think I can so far trust you that if at this dread moment (the clay of Madeline Lester scarce yet cold, woe busy and softening at your breast, and the son of the murdered dead before you), if at this moment you can lay your hand on your heart, and say, 'Before God, and at peril of my soul, I am innocent of this deed,' I will depart, I will believe you, and bear, as bear I may, the reflection that I have been one of the unconscious agents in condemning to a fearful death an innocent man! If innocent in this, how good, how perfect, in all else! But if you cannot at so dark a crisis take that oath, then, oh then! be just, be generous, even in guilt, and let me not be haunted throughout life by the spectre of a ghastly and restless doubt. Speak! oh, speak!"

Well, well may we judge how crushing must have been that doubt in the breast of one naturally bold and fiery when it thus humbled the very son of the murdered man to forget wrath and vengeance and descend to prayer! But Walter had heard the defence of Aram; he had marked his mien; not once in that trial had he taken his eyes from the prisoner; and he had felt, like a bolt of ice through his heart, that the sentence passed on the accused, *his* judgment could not have passed! How dreadful must, then, have been the state of his mind when, repairing to Lester's house, he found it the house of death,—the pure, the beautiful spirit gone; the father mourning for his child, and not to be comforted; and Ellinor— No;

scenes like these, thoughts like these, pluck the pride from a man's heart!

"Walter Lester," said Aram, after a pause, but raising his head with dignity, though on the features there was but one expression,—woe, unutterable woe, "Walter Lester, I had thought to quit life with my tale untold. But you have not appealed to me in vain; I tear the *self* from my heart,—I renounce the last haughty dream in which I wrapped myself from the ills around me. You shall learn all, and judge accordingly. But to your ear the tale can scarce be told; the son cannot hear in silence that which, unless I too unjustly, too wholly condemn myself, I must say of the dead. But time," continued Aram, mutteringly, and with his eyes on vacancy, "time does not press too fast. Better let the hand speak than the tongue. Yes, the day of execution is—ay, ay—two days yet to it—to-morrow? No! Young man," he said abruptly, turning to Walter, "on the day after to-morrow, about seven in the evening,—the eve before that morn fated to be my last,—come to me. At that time I will place in your hands a paper containing the whole history that connects myself with your father. On the word of a man on the brink of another world, no truth that imports your interest therein shall be omitted. But read it not till I am no more; and when read, confide the tale to none till Lester's gray hairs have gone to the grave. This swear; 't is an oath difficult perhaps to keep, but—"

"As my Redeemer lives, I will swear to both conditions!" cried Walter, with a solemn fervor. "But tell me now, at least—"

"Ask me no more," interrupted Aram, in his turn. "The time is near when you will know all; tarry that time, and leave me! Yes, leave me now, at once; leave me."

To dwell lingeringly over those passages which excite pain without satisfying curiosity, is scarcely the duty of the drama, or of that province even nobler than the drama,—for it requires minuter care, indulges in more complete description, yields to more elaborate investigation of motives, commands a greater variety of chords in the human heart,—to which, with

poor and feeble power for so high, yet so ill-appreciated a task we now, not irreverently if rashly, aspire!

We glance not around us at the chamber of death; at the broken heart of Lester; at the twofold agony of his surviving child,—the agony which mourns and yet seeks to console another; the mixed emotions of Walter, in which an unsleeping eagerness to learn the fearful all formed the main part; the solitary cell and solitary heart of the convicted,—we glance not at these; we pass at once to the evening in which Aram again saw Walter Lester, and for the last time.

"You are come, punctual to the hour," said he, in a low, clear voice: "I have not forgotten my word; the fulfilment of that promise has been a victory over myself which no man can appreciate: but I owed it to you. I have discharged the debt. Enough! I have done more than I at first purposed. I have extended my narration, but superficially in some parts, over my life,—that prolixity perhaps I owed to myself. Remember *your* promise: this seal is not broken till the pulse is stilled in the hand which now gives you these papers!"

Walter renewed his oath, and Aram, pausing for a moment, continued in an altered and softening voice,—

"Be kind to Lester; soothe, console him; never by a hint let him think otherwise of me than he does. For his sake more than mine I ask this. Venerable, kind old man! the warmth of human affection has rarely glowed for me. To the few who loved me, how deeply I have repaid the love! But these are not words to pass between you and me. Farewell! Yet before we part, say this much: whatever I have revealed in this confession, whatever has been my wrong to you, or whatever (a less offence) the language I have now, justifying myself, used to—to your father—say that you grant me that pardon which one man may grant another."

"Fully, cordially," said Walter.

"In the day that for you brings the death that to-morrow awaits me," said Aram, in a deep tone, "be that forgiveness accorded to yourself! Farewell. In that untried variety of being which spreads beyond us, who knows but that, in our several progress from grade to grade, and world to world, our

souls, though in far distant ages, may meet again,—one dim and shadowy memory of this hour the link between us! farewell, farewell!"

For the reader's interest we think it better (and certainly it is more immediately in the due course of narrative, if not of actual events) to lay at once before him the confession that Aram placed in Walter's hands, without waiting till that time when Walter himself broke the seal of a confession, not of deeds alone, but of thoughts how wild and entangled, of feelings how strange and dark, of a starred soul that had wandered from how proud an orbit to what perturbed and unholy regions of night and chaos! For me, I have not sought to derive the reader's interest from the vulgar sources that such a tale might have afforded; I have suffered him, almost from the beginning, to pierce into Aram's secret; and I have *prepared* him for that guilt, with which other narrators of this story might have only sought to *surprise.*

CHAPTER VII.

THE CONFESSION; AND THE FATE.

In winter's tedious nights sit by the fire
With good old folks and let them tell thee tales
Of woeful ages long ago betid;
And ere thou bid good night, to quit their griefs,
Tell thou the lamentable fall of me.—*Richard II.*

August, 1759.

I was born at Ramsgill, a little village in Netherdale. My family had originally been of some rank; they were formerly lords of the town of Aram, on the southern banks of the Tees. But time had humbled these pretensions to consideration, though they were still fondly cherished by the inheritors of an ancient name and idle but haughty recollections. My father resided on a small farm, and was especially skilful in horticulture,—a taste I derived from him. When I was about

thirteen, the deep and intense passion that has made the demon of my life, first stirred palpably within me. I had always been, from my cradle, of a solitary disposition, and inclined to revery and musing; these traits of character heralded the love that now seized me,—the love of knowledge. Opportunity or accident first directed my attention to the abstruser sciences. I poured my soul over that noble study which is the best foundation of all true discovery; and the success I met with soon turned my pursuits into more alluring channels. History, poetry,—the mastery of the past, and the spell that admits us into the visionary world,—took the place which lines and numbers had done before. I became gradually more and more rapt and solitary in my habits; knowledge assumed a yet more lovely and bewitching character, and every day the passion to attain it increased upon me. I do not—I have not now the heart to do it—enlarge upon what I acquired without assistance, and with labor sweet in proportion to its intensity.[1] The world, the creation, all things that lived, moved, and were, became to me objects contributing to one passionate and, I fancied, one exalted end. I suffered the lowlier pleasures of life, and the charms of its more common ties, to glide away from me untasted and unfelt. As you read, in the East, of men remaining motionless for days together, with their eyes fixed upon the heavens, my mind, absorbed in the contemplation of the things above its reach, had no sight of what passed around. My parents died, and I was an orphan. I had no home and no wealth; but wherever the field contained a flower, or the heavens a star, there was matter of thought, and food for delight, to me. I wandered alone for months together, seldom sleeping but in the open air, and shunning the human form as that part of God's works from which I could learn the least. I came to Knaresborough; the beauty of the country, a facility in acquiring books from a neighboring library that was open to me, made me resolve to settle there. And now, new desires opened

[1] We learn from a letter of Eugene Aram, now extant, that his method of acquiring the learned languages was to linger over five lines at a time, and never to quit a passage till he thought he had comprehended its meaning.

upon me with new stores,—I became haunted with the ambition to enlighten and instruct my race. At first I had loved knowledge solely for itself; I now saw afar an object grander than knowledge. To what end, said I, are these labors? Why do I feed a lamp which consumes itself in a desert place? Why do I heap up riches, without asking who shall gather them? I was restless and discontented. What could I do? I was friendless; I was strange to my kind; I saw my desires checked when their aim was at the highest; all that was aspiring in my hopes, and ardent in my nature, was cramped and chilled. I exhausted the learning within my reach. Where, with my appetite excited, not slaked, was I, destitute and penniless, to search for more? My abilities, by bowing them to the lowliest tasks, but kept me from famine: was this to be my lot forever? And all the while I was grinding down my soul in order to satisfy the vile physical wants, what golden hours, what glorious advantages, what openings into new heavens of science, what chance of illuminating mankind, were forever lost to me! Sometimes, when the young, to whom I taught some homely elements of knowledge, came around me; when they looked me in the face with their laughing eyes; when (for they all loved me) they told me their little pleasures and their petty sorrows,—I have wished that I could have gone back again into childhood, and, becoming as one of them, enter into that heaven of quiet which was denied me now. Yet it was more often with an indignant than a sorrowful spirit that I looked upon my lot. For there lay my life, imprisoned in penury as in the walls of a jail. Heaven smiled, and earth blossomed around; but how scale the stern barriers,—how steal through the inexorable gate? True, that by bodily labor I could give food to the body,—to starve by such labor the craving wants of the mind. Beg I could not. Whenever lived the real student, the true minister and priest of Knowledge, who was not filled with the lofty sense of the dignity of his calling? Was I to show the sores of my pride, and strip my heart from its clothing, and ask the dull fools of wealth not to let a scholar starve? No! He whom the vilest poverty ever stooped to this, may be the

quack, but never the true disciple of Learning. What did I then? I devoted the meanest part of my knowledge to the procuring the bare means of life; and the knowledge that pierced to the depths of earth, and numbered the stars of heaven,—why, that was valueless in the market!

In Knaresborough, at this time, I met a distant relation, Richard Houseman. Sometimes in our walks we encountered each other; for he sought me, and I could not always avoid him. He was a man like myself, born to poverty, yet he had always enjoyed what to him was wealth. This seemed a mystery to me; and when we met, we sometimes conversed upon it. "You are poor, with all your wisdom," said he. "I know nothing; but I am never poor. Why is this? The world is my treasury. I live upon my kind. Society is my foe. Laws order me to starve; but self-preservation is an instinct more sacred than society, and more imperious than laws."

The audacity of his discourse revolted me. At first I turned away in disgust; then I stood and heard—to ponder and inquire. Nothing so tasks the man of books as his first blundering guess at the problems of a guilty heart! Houseman had been a soldier; he had seen the greatest part of Europe; he possessed a strong, shrewd sense; he was a villain,—but a villain bold, adroit, and not then thoroughly unrèdeemed. Trouble seized me as I heard him, and the shadow of his life stretched farther and darker over the wilderness of mine. When Houseman asked me, "What law befriended the man without money? To what end I had cultivated my mind? or What good the voice of knowledge could effect while Poverty forbade it to be heard?" the answer died upon my lips. Then I sought to escape from these terrible doubts. I plunged again into my books. I called upon my intellect to defend, and my intellect betrayed me. For suddenly as I pored over my scanty books, a gigantic discovery in science gleamed across me. I saw the means of effecting a vast benefit to truth and to man,—of adding a new conquest to that only empire which no fate can overthrow, and no time wear away. And in this discovery I was stopped by the total inadequacy of my means.

The books and implements I required were not within my reach; a handful of gold would buy them,—I had not wherewithal to buy bread for the morrow's meal! In my solitude and misery this discovery haunted me like a visible form,—it smiled upon me; a fiend that took the aspect of beauty, it wooed me to its charms that it might lure my soul into its fangs. I heard it murmur, "One bold deed, and I am thine! Wilt thou lie down in the ditch and die the dog's death, or hazard thy life for the means that may serve and illumine the world? Shrinkest thou from men's laws, though the laws bid thee rot on their outskirts? Is it not for the service of man that thou shouldst for once break the law on behalf of that knowledge from which all laws take their source? If thou wrongest the one, thou shalt repay it in boons to the million. For the ill of an hour thou shalt give a blessing to ages!" So spoke to me the tempter. And one day, when the tempter spoke loudest, Houseman met me, accompanied by a stranger who had just visited our town, for what purpose you know already. His name—supposed name—was Clarke. Man, I am about to speak plainly of that stranger,—his character and his fate. And yet—yet you are his son! I would fain soften the coloring; but I speak truth of myself, and I must not, unless I would blacken my name yet deeper than it deserves, varnish truth when I speak of others. Houseman joined, and presented to me this person. From the first I felt a dislike of the stranger, which indeed it was easy to account for. He was of a careless and somewhat insolent manner. His countenance was impressed with the lines and characters of a thousand vices; you read in the brow and eye the history of a sordid yet reckless life. His conversation was repellent to me beyond expression. He uttered the meanest sentiments, and he chuckled over them as the maxims of a superior sagacity; he avowed himself a knave upon system, and upon the lowest scale. To overreach, to deceive, to elude, to shuffle, to fawn, and to lie, were the arts to which he confessed with so naked and cold a grossness that one perceived that in the long habits of debasement he was unconscious of what was not debased. Houseman seemed to draw him out.

Clarke told us anecdotes of his rascality, and the distresses to which it had brought him; and he finished by saying: "Yet you see me now almost rich, and wholly contented. I have always been the luckiest of human beings; no matter what ill chances to-day, good turns up to-morrow. I confess that I bring on myself the ill, and Providence sends me the good." We met accidentally more than once, and his conversation was always of the same strain,—his luck and his rascality; he had no other theme, and no other boast. And did not this aid the voice of the tempter? Was it not an ordination that called upon men to take fortune in their own hands when Fate lavished her rewards on this low and creeping thing that could only enter even Vice by its sewers and alleys? Was it worth while to be virtuous and look on, while the bad seized upon the feast of life? This man was but moved by the basest passions, the pettiest desires; he gratified them, and Fate smiled upon his daring. I, who had shut out from my heart the poor temptations of sense; I, who fed only the most glorious visions, the most august desires,—I denied myself their fruition, trembling and spellbound in the cerements of human laws, without hope, without reward, losing the very powers of virtue because I would not stray into crime!

These thoughts fell on me darkly and rapidly; but they led as yet to no result. I saw nothing beyond them. I suffered my indignation to gnaw my heart, and preserved the same calm and serene demeanor which had grown with my growth of mind. Strange that while I upbraided Fate, I did not cease to love mankind. I coveted—what? The power to serve them. I had been kind and loving to all things from a boy; there was not a dumb animal that would not single me from a crowd as its protector,[1]—and yet I was doomed— But

[1] All the authentic anecdotes of Aram corroborate the fact of his natural gentleness to all things. A clergyman (the Rev. Mr. Hinton) said that he used frequently to observe Aram, when walking in the garden, stoop down to remove a snail or worm from the path, to prevent its being destroyed. Mr. Hinton ingeniously conjectured that Aram wished to atone for his crime by showing mercy to every animal and insect; but the fact is that there are several anecdotes to show that he was equally humane *before* the crime was committed. Such are the strange contradictions of the human heart.

I must not forestall the dread catastrophe of my life. In returning, at night, to my own home from my long and solitary walks, I often passed the house in which Clarke lodged; and sometimes I met him reeling by the door, insulting all who passed,—and yet their resentment was absorbed in their disgust. "And this loathsome and grovelling thing," said I, inly, "squanders on low excesses, wastes upon outrages to society, that with which I could make my soul as a burning lamp that should shed a light over the world!"

There was that in the man's vices which revolted me far more than the villany of Houseman. The latter had possessed few advantages of education; he descended to no minutiæ of sin; he was a plain, blunt, coarse wretch, and his sense threw something respectable around his vices. But in Clarke you saw the traces of happier opportunities, of better education; it was in him not the coarseness of manner that displeased, it was the lowness of sentiment that sickened me. Had Houseman money in his purse, he would have paid a debt and relieved a friend from mere indifference; not so the other. Had Clarke been overflowing with wealth, he would have slipped from a creditor and duped a friend; there was a pitiful cunning in his nature which made him regard the lowest meanness as the subtlest wit. His mind, too, was not only degraded, but broken by his habits of life; he had the laugh of the idiot at his own debasement. Houseman was young, he might amend,—but Clarke had gray hairs and dim eyes; was old in constitution, if not years; and everything in him was hopeless and confirmed: the leprosy was in the system. Time, in this, has made Houseman what Clarke was then.

One day, in passing through the street, though it was broad noon, I encountered Clarke in a state of intoxication, and talking to a crowd he had collected around him. I sought to pass in an opposite direction; he would not suffer me,—he, whom I sickened to touch, to see, threw himself in my way, and affected gibe and insult, nay, even threat. But when he came near, he shrank before the mere glance of my eye, and I passed on, unheeding him. The insult galled me; he had

taunted my poverty,—poverty was a favorite jest with him,—it galled me. Anger? revenge? No; *those* passions I had never felt for any man. I could not rouse them for the first time at such a cause; yet I was lowered in my own eyes, I was stung. Poverty! *he* taunt *me!* I wandered from the town, and paused by the winding and shagged banks of the river. It was a gloomy winter's day; the waters rolled on black and sullen, and the dry leaves rustled desolately beneath my feet. Who shall tell us that outward Nature has no effect upon our mood? All around seemed to frown upon my lot. I read in the face of heaven and earth a confirmation of the curse which man hath set upon poverty. I leaned against a tree that overhung the waters, and suffered my thoughts to glide on in the bitter silence of their course. I heard my name uttered, I felt a hand on my arm, I turned, and Houseman was by my side.

"What! moralizing?" said he, with his rude smile.

I did not answer him.

"Look," said he, pointing to the waters, "where yonder fish lies waiting his prey,—that prey his kind. Come, you have read Nature: is it not so universally?"

Still I did not answer him.

"They who do not as the rest," he renewed, "fulfil not the object of their existence; they seek to be wiser than their tribe, and are fools for their pains. Is it not so? I am a plain man, and would learn."

Still I did not answer him.

"You are silent," said he: "do I offend you?"

"No!"

"Now, then," he continued, "strange as it may seem, we, so different in mind, are at this moment alike in fortunes. I have not a guinea in the wide world; you, perhaps, are equally destitute. But mark the difference: I, the ignorant man, ere three days have passed, will have filled my purse; you, the wise man, will be still as poor. Come, cast away your wisdom, and do as I do."

"How?"

"Take from the superfluities of others what your necessi

ties crave. My horse, my pistol, a ready hand, a stout heart, these are to me what coffers are to others. There is the chance of detection and death: I allow it; but is not this chance better than some certainties?"

The tempter with the glorious face and the demon fangs rose again before me, and spoke in the robber's voice.

"Will you share the danger and the booty?" renewed Houseman, in a low voice.

"Speak out," said I; "explain your purpose!"

Houseman's looks brightened.

"Listen!" said he; "Clarke, despite his present wealth, lawfully gained, is about to purloin more; he has converted his legacy into jewels; he has borrowed other jewels on false pretences; he intends to make these also his own, and to leave the town in the dead of night: he has confided to me his purpose and asked my aid. He and I, be it known to you, were friends of old; we have shared together other dangers and other spoils. Now do you guess my meaning? Let us ease him of his burden! I offer to you the half; share the enterprise and its fruits."

I rose, I walked away, I pressed my hands on my heart. Houseman saw the conflict. He followed me; he named the value of the prize he proposed to gain: that which he called my share placed all my wishes within my reach,—leisure, independence, knowledge. The sublime Discovery, the possession of the glorious Fiend,—all, all within my grasp, and by a single deed; no frauds oft repeated, no sins long continued,—a single deed! I breathed heavily, but the weight still lay upon my heart. I shut my eyes and shuddered: the mortal shuddered, but still the demon smiled.

"Give me your hand," said Houseman.

"No, no," I said, breaking away from him; "I must pause, I must consider. I do not yet refuse, but I will not now decide."

Houseman pressed, but I persevered in my determination; he would have threatened me, but my nature was haughtier than his, and I subdued him. It was agreed that he should seek me that night and learn my choice; the next night was

the one on which the robbery was to be committed. We parted; I returned an altered man to my home. Fate had woven her mesh around me; a new incident had occurred, which strengthened the web: there was a poor girl whom I had been accustomed to see in my walks. She supported her family by her dexterity in making lace,—a quiet, patient-looking, gentle creature. Clarke had, a few days since, under pretence of purchasing lace, decoyed her to his house (when all but himself were from home), where he used the most brutal violence towards her. The extreme poverty of the parents had enabled him easily to persuade them to hush up the matter, but something of the story got abroad; the poor girl was marked out for that gossip and scandal which among the very lowest classes are as coarse in the expression as malignant in the sentiment; and in the paroxysm of shame and despair the unfortunate girl had that day destroyed herself. This melancholy event wrung forth from the parents the real story: the event and the story reached my ears at the very hour in which my mind was wavering to and fro. "And it is to such uses," said the tempter, "that this man puts his gold!"

Houseman came punctual to our dark appointment. I gave him my hand in silence. The tragic end of his victim, and the indignation it caused, made Clarke yet more eager to leave the town. He had settled with Houseman that he would abscond that very night,—not wait for the next, as at first he had intended. His jewels and property were put in a small compass. He had arranged that he would, towards midnight or later, quit his lodging, and about a mile from the town, Houseman had engaged to have a chaise in readiness. For this service Clarke had promised Houseman a reward with which the latter appeared contented. It was agreed that I should meet Houseman and Clarke at a certain spot in their way from the town. Houseman appeared at first fearful lest I should relent and waver in my purpose. It is never so with men whose thoughts are deep and strong. To resolve was the arduous step,—once resolved, and I cast not a look behind. Houseman left me for the present. I could not rest in my

chamber; I went forth and walked about the town. The night deepened; I saw the lights in each house withdrawn, one by one, and at length all was hushed,—Silence and Sleep kept court over the abodes of men. Nature never seemed to me to make so dread a pause.

The moon came out, but with a pale and sickly countenance. It was winter; the snow, which had been falling towards eve, lay deep upon the ground; and the frost seemed to lock the universal nature into the same dread tranquillity which had taken possession of my soul.

Houseman was to have come to me at midnight, just before Clarke left his house; but it was nearly two hours after that time ere he arrived. I was then walking to and fro before my own door. I saw that he was not alone, but with Clarke. "Ha!" said he, "this is fortunate; I see you are just going home. You were engaged, I recollect, at some distance from the town, and have, I suppose, just returned. Will you admit Mr. Clarke and myself for a short time? For to tell you the truth," said he, in a lower voice, "the watchman is about, and we must not be seen by him! I have told Clarke that he may trust you,—*we* are relatives!"

Clarke, who seemed strangely credulous and indifferent, considering the character of his associate,—but those whom Fate destroys she first blinds,—made the same request in a careless tone, assigning the same cause. Unwillingly, I opened the door and admitted them. We went up to my chamber. Clarke spoke with the utmost unconcern of the fraud he purposed, and with a heartlessness that made my veins boil of the poor wretch his brutality had destroyed. They stayed for nearly an hour, for the watchman remained some time in that beat; and then Houseman asked me to accompany them a little way out of the town. Clarke seconded the request. We walked forth. The rest why need I tell? I cannot, O God, I cannot! Houseman lied in the court. I did not strike the blow, I never designed a murder. Crime enough in a robber's deed! He fell, he grasped my hand raised not to strike, but to shield him! Never more has the right hand cursed by that dying clasp been given in pledge of

human faith and friendship. But the deed was done, and the robber's comrade, in the eyes of man and law, was the murderer's accomplice.

Houseman divided the booty; my share he buried in the earth, leaving me to withdraw it when I chose. There, perhaps, it lies still. I never touched what I had murdered my *own* life to gain. His share, by the aid of a gypsy hag with whom he had dealings, Houseman removed to London. And now, mark what poor strugglers we are in the eternal web of destiny! Three days after that deed a relation, who neglected me in life, died, and left me wealth,—wealth at least to me; wealth greater than that for which I had . . . ! The news fell on me as a thunderbolt. Had I waited but three little days! Just Heaven! when they told me, I thought I heard the devils laugh out at the fool who had boasted wisdom. Had I waited but three days, three little days; had but a dream been sent me, had but my heart cried within me, "Thou hast suffered long, tarry yet!"[1] No, it was for this, for the guilt and its penance, for the wasted life and the shameful death,—with all my thirst for good, my dreams of glory,—that I was born, that I was marked from my first sleep in the cradle.

The disappearance of Clarke of course created great excitement; those whom he had overreached had naturally an inter-

[1] Aram has hitherto been suffered to tell his own tale, without comment or interruption. The chain of reasonings, the metaphysical labyrinth of defence and motive, which he wrought around his guilt, it was, in justice to him, necessary to give at length, in order to throw a clearer light on his character, and lighten, perhaps, in some measure the colors of his crime. No moral can be more impressive than that which teaches how man can entangle himself in his own sophisms; that moral is better, viewed aright, than volumes of homilies But here I must pause for one moment to bid the reader remark that that event which confirmed Aram in the bewildering doctrines of his pernicious fatalism, ought rather to inculcate the divine virtue—the foundation of all virtues, Heathen or Christian; that which Epictetus made clear, and Christ sacred—FORTITUDE. The reader will note that the answer to the reasonings that probably *convinced* the mind of Aram, and blinded him to his crime, may be found in *the change of* feelings by which the crime was followed. I must apologize for this interruption; it seemed to me advisable in this place.

est in discovering him. Some vague surmises that he might have been made away with were rumored abroad. Houseman and I, owing to some concurrence of circumstance, were examined,—not that suspicion attached to me before or after the examination. That ceremony ended in nothing. Houseman did not betray himself; and I, who from a boy had mastered my passions, could master also the nerves by which passions are betrayed. But I read in the face of the woman with whom I lodged that I was suspected. Houseman told me that she had openly expressed her suspicion to him,—nay, he entertained some design against her life, which he naturally abandoned on quitting the town. This he did soon afterwards. I did not linger long behind him. I received my legacy, and departed on foot to Scotland. And now I was above want: was I at rest? Not yet. I felt urged on to wander,—Cain's curse descends to Cain's children. I travelled for some considerable time; I saw men and cities, and I opened a new volume in my kind. It was strange, but before the deed I was as a child in the ways of the world, and a child, despite my knowledge, might have duped me. The moment after it, a light broke upon me,—it seemed as if my eyes were touched with a charm, and rendered capable of piercing the hearts of men! Yes, it *was* a charm, a new charm,—it was SUSPICION! I now practised myself in the use of arms; they made my sole companions. Peaceful as I seemed to the world, I felt there was that eternally within me with which the world was at war.

And what became of the superb ambition which had undone me? Where vanished that Grand Discovery which was to benefit the world? The ambition died in remorse, and the vessel that should have borne me to the far Land of Science lay rotting piecemeal on a sea of blood. The Past destroyed my old heritage in the Future. The consciousness that at any hour, in the possession of honors, by the hearth of love, I might be dragged forth and proclaimed a murderer; that I held my life, my reputation, at the breath of accident; that in the moment I least dreamed of, the earth might yield its dead and the gibbet demand its victim,—this could I feel, all

this, and not see a spectre in the place of science? — a spectre that walked by my side, that slept in my bed, that rose from my books, that glided between me and the stars of heaven, that stole along the flowers and withered their sweet breath, that whispered in my ear, "Toil, fool, and be wise; the gift of wisdom is to place us above the reach of fortune, but *thou* art her veriest minion!" Yes; I paused at last from my wanderings, and surrounded myself with books, and knowledge became once more to me what it had been, — a thirst, — but not what it had been, — a reward. I occupied my thoughts, I laid up new hoards within my mind, I looked around, and I saw few whose stores were like my own; but gone forever the sublime desire of applying wisdom to the service of mankind! Mankind had grown my foes. I looked upon them with other eyes. I knew that I carried within me that secret which, if bared to day, would make them loathe and hate me, —yea, though I coined my future life into one series of benefits to them and their posterity! Was not this thought enough to quell my ardor, to chill activity into rest? The brighter the honors I might win, the greater the services I might bestow on the world, the more dread and fearful might be my fall at last! I might be but piling up the scaffold from which I was to be hurled! Possessed by these thoughts, a new view of human affairs succeeded to my old aspirings: the moment a man feels that an object has ceased to charm, his reasonings reconcile himself to his loss. "Why," said I, "why flatter myself that *I can* serve, that I can enlighten mankind? Are we fully sure that individual wisdom has ever, in reality, done so? Are we really better because Newton lived, and happier because Bacon thought?" These freezing reflections pleased the present state of my mind more than the warm and yearning enthusiasm it had formerly nourished. Mere worldly ambition, from a boy I had disdained; the true worth of sceptres and crowns, the disquietude of power, the humiliations of vanity, had never been disguised from my sight. Intellectual ambition had inspired me. I now regarded it equally as a delusion. I coveted light solely for my own soul to bathe in.

Rest now became to me the sole τὸ καλόν, the sole charm of

existence. I grew enamoured of the doctrine of those old mystics who have placed happiness only in an even and balanced quietude. And where but in utter loneliness was that quietude to be enjoyed? I no longer wondered that men in former times, when consumed by the recollection of some haunting guilt, fled to the desert and became hermits. Tranquillity and solitude are the only soothers of a memory deeply troubled: light griefs fly to the crowd, fierce thoughts must battle themselves to rest. Many years had flown, and I had made my home in many places. All that was turbulent, if not all that was unquiet, in my recollections had died away. Time had lulled me into a sense of security. I breathed more freely. I sometimes stole from the past. Since I had quitted Knaresborough chance had often thrown it in my power to serve my brethren,—not by wisdom, but by charity or courage; by individual acts that it soothed me to remember. If the grand aim of enlightening a world was gone, if to so enlarged a benevolence had succeeded apathy or despair, still the man, the human man, clung to my heart; still was I as prone to pity, as prompt to defend, as glad to cheer, whenever the vicissitudes of life afforded me the occasion,—and to poverty, most of all, my hand never closed. For, oh, what a terrible devil creeps into that man's soul who sees famine at his door! One tender act, and how many black designs, struggling into life within, you may crush forever! He who deems the world his foe,—convince *him* that he has one friend, and it is like snatching a dagger from his hand!

I came to a beautiful and remote part of the country,—Walter Lester, I came to Grassdale! The enchanting scenery around, the sequestered and deep retirement of the place, arrested me at once. "And among these valleys," I said, "will I linger out the rest of my life, and among these quiet graves shall mine be dug, and my secret shall die with me!"

I rented the lonely house in which I dwelt when you first knew me; thither I transported my books and instruments of science, and a deep quiet, almost amounting to content, fell like a sweet sleep upon my soul!

In this state of mind, the most free from memory that I had

known for twelve years, I first saw Madeline Lester. Even with that first time a sudden and heavenly light seemed to dawn upon me. Her face — its still, its serene, its touching beauty — shone down on my desolation like a dream of mercy, like a hope of pardon. My heart warmed as I beheld it, my pulse woke from its even slowness. I was young once more; young, — the youth, the freshness, the ardor, not of the frame only, but of the soul. But I then only saw or spoke to her, scarce knew her, not loved her; nor was it often that we met. The south wind stirred the dark waters of my mind; but it passed, and all became hushed again. It was not for two years from the time we first saw each other that accident brought us closely together. I pass over the rest. We loved! Yet, oh! what struggles were mine during the progress of that love. How unnatural did it seem to me to yield to a passion that united me to my kind; and as I loved her more, how far more torturing grew my fear of the future! That which had almost slept before, awoke again to terrible life. The soil that covered the past might be riven, the dead awake, and that ghastly chasm separate me forever from HER! What a doom, too, might I bring upon that breast which had begun so confidingly to love me! Often, often I resolved to fly, to forsake her, to seek some desert spot in the distant parts of the world, and never to be betrayed again into human emotions! But as the bird flutters in the net, as the hare doubles from its pursuers, I did but wrestle, I did but trifle, with an irresistible doom. Mark how strange are the coincidences of Fate, — Fate that gives us warnings, and takes away the power to obey them, the idle prophetess, the juggling fiend! On the same evening that brought me acquainted with Madeline Lester, Houseman, led by schemes of fraud and violence into that part of the country, discovered and sought me! Imagine my feelings when in the hush of night I opened the door of my lonely home to his summons, and by the light of that moon which had witnessed so never-to-be-forgotten a companionship between us, beheld my accomplice in murder after the lapse of so many years! Time and a course of vice had changed and hardened and lowered his nature; and in the power, at

the will, of that nature I beheld myself abruptly placed. He passed that night under my roof. He was poor; I gave him what was in my hands. He promised to leave that part of England, to seek me no more.

The next day I could not bear my own thoughts, the revulsion was too sudden, too full of turbulent, fierce, torturing emotions; I fled for a short relief to the house to which Madeline's father had invited me. But in vain I sought, by wine, by converse, by human voices, human kindness, to fly the ghost that had been raised from the grave of time. I soon returned to my own thoughts. I resolved to wrap myself once more in the solitude of my heart. But let me not repeat what I have said before, somewhat prematurely, in my narrative. I resolved, I struggled in vain; Fate had ordained that the sweet life of Madeline Lester should wither beneath the poison tree of mine. Houseman sought me again; and now came on the humbling part of crime,— its low calculations, its poor defence, its paltry trickery, its mean hypocrisy. They made my chiefest penance. I was to evade, to beguile, to buy into silence this rude and despised ruffian. No matter now to repeat how this task was fulfilled; I surrendered nearly my all on the condition of his leaving England forever. Not till I thought that condition already fulfilled, till the day had passed on which he should have left England, did I consent to allow Madeline's fate to be irrevocably woven with mine.

How often, when the soul sins, are her loftiest feelings punished through her lowest! To me, lone, rapt, forever on the wing to unearthly speculation, galling and humbling was it, indeed, to be suddenly called from the eminence of thought to barter in pounds and pence for life, and with one like Houseman! These are the curses that deepen the tragedy of life, by grinding down our pride. But I wander back to what I have before said. I was to marry Madeline. I was once more poor, but want did not rise before me: I had succeeded in obtaining the promise of a competence from one whom you know. For that which I had once sought to force from my kind, I asked now, not with the spirit of the beggar, but of

the just claimant, and in that spirit it was granted. And now I was really happy: Houseman I believed removed forever from my path; Madeline was about to be mine. I surrendered myself to love, and, blind and deluded, I wandered on, and awoke on the brink of that precipice into which I am about to plunge. You know the rest. But oh, what now was my horror! It had not been a mere worthless, isolated unit in creation that I had seen blotted out of the sum of life,—the murder done in my presence, and of which Law would deem me the accomplice, had been done upon the brother of him whose child was my betrothed. Mysterious avenger, relentless Fate, how, when I deemed myself the farthest from her, had I been sinking into her grasp! How incalculable, how measureless, how viewless the consequences of one crime, even when we think we have weighed them all with scales that have turned with a hair's weight! Hear me,—as the voice of a man who is on the brink of a world, the awful nature of which reason cannot pierce,—hear me! When your heart tempts to some wandering from the line allotted to the rest of men, and whispers, "This may be crime in others, but is not so in thee;" or, "It is but one misdeed, it shall entail no other,"—tremble; cling fast, fast to the path you are lured to leave. Remember me!

But in this state of mind I was yet forced to play the hypocrite. Had I been alone in the world, had Madeline and Lester not been to me what they were, I might have disproved the charge of fellowship in murder; I might have wrung from the pale lips of Houseman the actual truth. But though I might clear myself as the murderer, I must condemn myself as the robber; and in avowal of that lesser guilt, though I might have lessened the abhorrence of others, I should have inflicted a blow, worse than that of my death itself, on the hearts of those who deemed me sinless as themselves. *Their* eyes were on me; *their* lives were set on my complete acquittal, less even of life than honor,—my struggle against truth was less for myself than them. My defence fulfilled its end: Madeline died without distrusting the innocence of him she loved. Lester, unless you betray me, will die in the same

belief. In truth, since the arts of hypocrisy have *been* commenced, the pride of consistency would have made it sweet to me to leave the world in a like error, or at least in doubt. For you I conquer that desire,—the proud man's last frailty. And now my tale is done. From what passes at this instant within my heart, I lift not the veil. Whether beneath be despair, or hope, or fiery emotions, or one settled and ominous calm, matters not. My last hours shall not belie my life; on the verge of death I will not play the dastard, and tremble at the Dim Unknown. Perhaps I am not without hope that the Great Unseen Spirit, whose emanation within me I have nursed and worshipped, though erringly and in vain, may see in his fallen creature one bewildered by his reason rather than yielding to his vices. The guide I received from heaven betrayed me, and I was lost; but I have not plunged wittingly from crime to crime. Against one guilty deed, some good and much suffering may be set; and dim and afar off from my allotted bourn, I may behold in her glorious home the face of her who taught me to love, and who, even there, could scarce be blessed without shedding the light of her divine forgiveness upon me. Enough! ere you break this seal my doom rests not with man nor earth. The burning desires I have known, the resplendent visions I have nursed, the sublime inspirings that have lifted me so often from sense and clay, —these tell me that, whether for good or ill, I am the thing of an Immortality and the creature of a God! As men of the old wisdom drew their garments around their face and sat down collectedly to die, I wrap myself in the settled resignation of a soul firm to the last, and taking not from man's vengeance even the method of its dismissal. The courses of my life I swayed with my own hand; from mine own hand shall come the manner and moment of death!

EUGENE ARAM.

On the day after that evening in which Aram had given the above confession to Walter Lester,—on the day of execution, —when they entered the condemned cell they found the prisoner lying on the bed; and when they approached to take off

the irons, they found that he neither stirred nor answered to their call. They attempted to raise him, and he then uttered some words in a faint voice. They perceived that he was covered with blood. He had opened his veins in two places in the arm with a sharp instrument which he had contrived to conceal. A surgeon was instantly sent for, and by the customary applications the prisoner in some measure was brought to himself. Resolved not to defraud the law of its victim, they bore him, though he appeared unconscious of all around, to the fatal spot. But when he arrived at that dread place, his sense suddenly seemed to return. He looked hastily round the throng that swayed and murmured below, and a faint flush rose to his cheek; he cast his eyes impatiently above, and breathed hard and convulsively. The dire preparations were made, completed; but the prisoner drew back for an instant. Was it from mortal fear? He motioned to the clergyman to approach, as if about to whisper some last request in his ear. The clergyman bowed his head; there was a minute's awful pause; Aram seemed to struggle as for words; when, suddenly throwing himself back, a bright, triumphant smile flashed over his whole face. With that smile the haughty spirit passed away, and the law's last indignity was wreaked upon a breathless corpse!

CHAPTER VIII. AND LAST.

THE TRAVELLER'S RETURN.—THE COUNTRY VILLAGE ONCE MORE VISITED.—ITS INHABITANTS.—THE REMEMBERED BROOK.—THE DESERTED MANOR-HOUSE.—THE CHURCH-YARD.—THE TRAVELLER RESUMES HIS JOURNEY.—THE COUNTRY TOWN.—A MEETING OF TWO LOVERS AFTER LONG ABSENCE AND MUCH SORROW.—CONCLUSION.

> THE lopped tree in time may grow again,
> Most naked plants renew both fruit and flower;
> The sorriest wight may find release from pain,
> The driest soil suck in some moistening shower:
> Times go by turns, and chances change by course
> From foul to fair.—ROBERT SOUTHWELL.

SOMETIMES, towards the end of a gloomy day, the sun, before but dimly visible, breaks suddenly out, and where before you had noticed only the sterner outline of the mountains, you turn with relief to the lowlier features of the vale. So in this record of crime and sorrow, the ray that breaks forth at the close brings into gentle light the shapes which the earlier darkness had obscured.

It was some years after the date of the last event we have recorded, and it was a fine, warm noon in the happy month of May, when a horseman rode slowly through the long, straggling village of Grassdale. He was a man, though in the prime of youth (for he might yet want some two years of thirty), who bore the steady and earnest air of one who has wrestled with the world,—his eye keen but tranquil; his sunburnt though handsome features, which thought or care had despoiled of the roundness of their early contour, leaving the cheek somewhat sunken and the lines somewhat marked, were characterized by a grave, and at that moment by a melancholy and soft, expression; and now, as his horse proceeded slowly through the green lane which at every vista gave

glimpses of rich, verdant valleys, the sparkling river, or the orchard ripe with the fragrant blossoms of spring, his head drooped upon his breast and the tears started to his eyes. The dress of the horseman was of foreign fashion, and at that day, when the garb still denoted the calling, sufficiently military to show the profession he had belonged to. And well did the garb become the short, dark mustache, the sinewy chest, and length of limb of the young horseman,—recommendations, the two latter, not despised in the court of the Great Frederick of Prussia, in whose service he had borne arms. He had commenced his career in that battle terminating in the signal defeat of the bold Daun, when the fortunes of that gallant general paled at last before the star of the greatest of modern kings. The peace of 1763 had left Prussia in the quiet enjoyment of the glory she had obtained, and the young Englishman took the advantage it afforded him of seeing, as a traveller, not despoiler, the rest of Europe.

The adventure and the excitement of travel pleased, and left him even now uncertain whether or not his present return to England would be for long. He had not been a week returned, and to this part of his native country he had hastened at once.

He checked his horse as he now passed the memorable sign that yet swung before the door of Peter Dealtry; and there, under the shade of the broad tree, now budding into all its tenderest verdure, a pedestrian wayfarer sat enjoying the rest and coolness of his shelter. Our horseman cast a look at the open door, across which, in the bustle of housewifery, female forms now and then glanced and vanished, and presently he saw Peter himself saunter forth to chat with the traveller beneath his tree. And Peter Dealtry was the same as ever, only he seemed perhaps shorter and thinner than of old, as if Time did not so much break as gradually wear away mine host's slender person.

The horseman gazed for a moment, but observing Peter return the gaze, he turned aside his head, and putting his horse into a canter, soon passed out of cognizance of The Spotted Dog.

He now came in sight of the neat white cottage of the old

corporal; and there, leaning over the pale, a crutch under one arm and his friendly pipe in one corner of his shrewd mouth, was the corporal himself. Perched upon the railing in a semi-doze, the ears down, the eyes closed, sat a large brown cat. Poor Jacobina, it was not thyself! death spares neither cat nor king; but thy virtues lived in thy grandchild, and thy grandchild (as age brings dotage) was loved even more than thee by the worthy corporal. Long may thy race flourish! for at this day it is not extinct. Nature rarely inflicts barrenness on the feline tribe; they are essentially made for love and love's soft cares, and a cat's lineage outlives the lineage of kaisers.

At the sound of hoofs the corporal turned his head, and he looked long and wistfully at the horseman as, relaxing his horse's pace into a walk, our traveller rode slowly on.

"'Fore George," muttered the corporal, "a fine man, a very fine man; 'bout my inches, augh!"

A smile, but a very faint smile, crossed the lip of the horseman as he gazed on the figure of the stalwart corporal.

"He eyes me hard," thought he, "yet he does not seem to remember me. I must be greatly changed. 'T is fortunate, however, that I am not recognized; fain, indeed, at this time would I come and go unnoticed and alone."

The horseman fell into a revery, which was broken by the murmur of the sunny rivulet fretting over each little obstacle it met,— the happy and spoiled child of Nature! That murmur rang on the horseman's ear like a voice from his boyhood: how familiar was it, how dear! No haunting tone of music ever recalled so rushing a host of memories and associations as that simple, restless, everlasting sound! Everlasting! All had changed,— the trees had sprung up or decayed; some cottages around were ruins, some new and unfamiliar ones supplied their place; and on the stranger himself — on all those whom the sound recalled to his heart — Time had been, indeed, at work; but with the same exulting bound and happy voice, that little brook leaped along its way. Ages hence, may the course be as glad, and the murmur as full of mirth! They are blessed things, those remote and unchanging streams,—

they fill us with the same love as if they were living creatures; and in a green corner of the world there is one that, for my part, I never see without forgetting myself to tears, —tears that I would not lose for a king's ransom; tears that no other sight or sound could call from their source; tears of what affection, what soft regret; tears through the soft mists of which I behold what I have lost on earth and hope to regain in heaven!

The traveller, after a brief pause, continued his road; and now he came full upon the old manor-house. The weeds were grown up in the garden, the mossed paling was broken in many places, the house itself was shut up, and the sun glanced on the deep-sunk casements, without finding its way into the desolate interior. High above the old hospitable gate hung a board announcing that the house was for sale, and referring the curious or the speculating to the attorney of the neighboring town. The horseman sighed heavily, and muttered to himself; then, turning up the road that led to the back entrance, he came into the court-yard, and leading his horse into an empty stable, he proceeded on foot through the dismantled premises, pausing with every moment, and holding a sad and ever-changing commune with himself. An old woman, a stranger to him, was the sole inmate of the house; and imagining he came to buy, or at least examine, she conducted him through the house, pointing out its advantages and lamenting its dilapidated state. Our traveller scarcely heard her; but when he came to one room, which he would not enter till the last (it was the little parlor in which the once happy family had been wont to sit), he sank down in the chair that had been Lester's honored seat, and covering his face with his hands, did not move or look up for several moments. The old woman gazed at him with surprise. "Perhaps, sir, you knew the family? They were greatly beloved."

The traveller did not answer; but when he rose, he muttered to himself: "No, the experiment is made in vain. Never, never, could I live here again. It must be so,—the house of my forefathers *must* pass into a stranger's hands." With this reflection he hurried from the house, and re-entering the gar-

den, turned through a little gate that swung half open on its shattered hinges, and led into the green and quiet sanctuaries of the dead. The same touching character of deep and undisturbed repose that hallows the country church-yard,—and that one more than most,—yet brooded there, as when, years ago, it woke his young mind to reflection, then unmingled with regret.

He passed over the rude mounds of earth that covered the deceased poor, and paused at a tomb of higher, though but of simple pretensions; it was not yet discolored by the dews and seasons, and the short inscription traced upon it was strikingly legible in comparison with those around:—

ROWLAND LESTER.
Obiit 1760, æt. 64.
Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.

By that tomb the traveller remained in undisturbed contemplation for some time; and when he turned, all the swarthy color had died from his cheek, his eyes were dim, and the wonted pride of a young man's step and a soldier's bearing was gone from his mien.

As he looked up, his eye caught afar, embedded among the soft verdure of the spring, one lone and gray house, from whose chimney there rose no smoke,—sad, inhospitable, dismantled as that beside which he now stood, as if the curse which had fallen on the inmates of either mansion still clung to either roof. One hasty glance only the traveller gave to the solitary and distant abode, and then started and quickened his pace.

On re-entering the stables, the traveller found the corporal examining his horse from head to foot with great care and attention.

"Good hoofs too, humph!" quoth the corporal, as he released the front leg; and turning round, saw, with some little confusion, the owner of the steed he had been honoring with

so minute a survey. "Oh, augh! looking at the beastie, sir, lest it might have cast a shoe. Thought your honor might want some intelligent person to show you the premises, if so be you have come to buy,—nothing but an old 'oman there; dare say your honor does not like old 'omen, augh!"

"The owner is not in these parts?" said the horseman.

"No, over seas, sir; a fine young gentleman, but hasty; and, and— But Lord bless me! sure—no, it can't be—yes, now you turn—it is—it is my young master!" So saying, the corporal, roused into affection, hobbled up to the wanderer and seized and kissed his hand. "Ah, sir, we shall be glad indeed to see you back after such doings. But 's all forgotten now, and gone by, augh. Poor Miss Ellinor, how happy she 'll be to see your honor. Ah! how she be changed, surely!"

"Changed? Ay, I make no doubt! What,—does she look in weak health?"

"No; as to that, your honor, she be winsome enough still," quoth the corporal, smacking his lips. "I seed her the week afore last, when I went over to ——; for I suppose you knows as she lives there, all alone like, in a small house with a green rail afore it and a brass knocker on the door at top of the town, with a fine view of the —— hills in front? Well, sir, I seed her, and mighty handsome she looked, though a little thinner than she was; but for all that, she be greatly changed."

"How, for the worse?"

"For the worse indeed," answered the corporal, assuming an air of melancholy and grave significance; "she be grown so religious, sir, think of that,—augh, bother, whaugh!"

"Is that all?" said Walter, relieved, and with a slight smile. "And she lives alone?"

"Quite, poor young lady, as if she had made up her mind to be an old maid,—though I know as how she refused Squire Knyvett of the Grange; waiting for your honor's return, mayhap!"

"Lead out the horse, Bunting. But stay, I am sorry to see you with a crutch: what 's the cause? No accident, I trust?"

"Merely rheumatics,—will attack the youngest of us. Never been quite myself since I went a travelling with your honor, augh! without going to Lunnon arter all. But I shall be stronger next year, I dare to say!"

"I hope you will, Bunting. And Miss Lester lives alone, you say?"

"Ay; and for all she be so religious, the poor about do bless her very footsteps. She does a power of good,—she gave *me* half-a-guinea last Tuesday fortnight. An excellent young lady, so sensible like!"

"Thank you; I can tighten the girths,—so! There, Bunting, there 's something for old companionship's sake."

"Thank your honor; you be too good,—always was, baugh! But I hopes your honor be a coming to live here now; 't will make things smile again!"

"No, Bunting, I fear not," said Walter, spurring through the gates of the yard. "Good day."

"Augh! then," cried the corporal, hobbling breathlessly after him, "if so be as I sha 'n't see your honor agin, at which I am extramely consarned, will your honor recollect your promise touching the 'tato-ground? The steward, Master Bailey, 'od rot him! has clean forgot it, augh!"

"The same old man, Bunting, eh? Well, make your mind easy; it shall be done."

"Lord bless your honor's good heart, thank ye; and—and," laying his hand on the bridle, "your honor *did* say the bit cot should be rent-free. You see, your honor," quoth the corporal, drawing up with a grave smile, "I may marry some day or other, and have a large family, and the rent won't sit so easy then, augh!"

"Let go the rein, Bunting, and consider your house rent-free."

"And your honor, and—"

But Walter was already in a brisk trot, and the remaining petitions of the corporal died in empty air.

"A good day's work too," muttered Jacob, hobbling homeward. "What a green 'un 't is, still! Never be a man of the world, augh!"

For two hours Walter did not relax the rapidity of his pace; and when he did so, at the descent of a steep hill, a small country town lay before him, the sun glittering on its single spire, and lighting up the long, clean centre street, with the good old-fashioned garden stretching behind each house, and detached cottages around, peeping forth here and there from the blossoms and verdure of the young May. He rode into the yard of the principal inn, and putting up his horse, inquired, in a tone that he persuaded himself was the tone of indifference, for Miss Lester's house.

"John," said the landlady (landlord there was none), summoning a little boy of about ten years old, "run on and show this gentleman the good lady's house; and, stay,—his honor will excuse you a moment,—just take up the nosegay you cut for her this morning; she loves flowers. Ah! sir, an excellent young lady is Miss Lester," continued the hostess as the boy ran back for the nosegay,—"so charitable, so kind, so meek to all. Adversity, they say, softens some characters; but she must always have been good. Well, God bless her! and that every one must say. My boy John, sir,—he is not eleven yet, come next August, a 'cute boy,—calls her the good lady; we now always call her so here. Come, John, that 's right. You stay to dine here, sir? Shall I put down a chicken?"

At the farther extremity of the town stood Miss Lester's dwelling. It was the house in which her father had spent his last days; and there she had continued to reside when left by his death to a small competence, which Walter, then abroad, had persuaded her (for her pride was of the right kind) to suffer him, though but slightly, to increase. It was a detached and small building, standing a little from the road; and Walter paused for some moments at the garden-gate and gazed round him before he followed his young guide, who, tripping lightly up the gravel-walk to the door, rang the bell and inquired if Miss Lester was within.

Walter was left for some moments alone in a little parlor,—he required these moments to recover himself from the past that rushed sweepingly over him. And was it—yes, it was

Ellinor that now stood before him! Changed she was indeed, — the slight girl had budded into woman; changed she was indeed, — the bound had forever left that step, once so elastic with hope; the vivacity of the quick dark eye was soft and quiet; the rich color had given place to a hue fainter, though not less lovely. But to repeat in verse what is poorly bodied forth in prose, —

> "And years had passed, and thus they met again.
> The wind had swept along the flowers since then;
> O'er her fair cheek a paler lustre spread,
> As if the white rose triumphed o'er the red.
> No more she walked, exulting, on the air;
> Light though her step, there was a languor there.
> No more — her spirit bursting from its bound—
> She stood, like Hebe, scattering smiles around."

"Ellinor," said Walter, mournfully, "thank God, we meet at last!"

"That voice — that face — my cousin — my dear, dear Walter!"

All reserve, all consciousness fled in the delight of that moment; and Ellinor leaned her head upon his shoulder and scarcely felt the kiss that he pressed upon her lips.

"And so long absent!" said Ellinor, reproachfully.

"But did you not tell me that the blow that had fallen on our house had stricken from you all thoughts of love, had divided us forever? And what, Ellinor, was England or home without you?"

"Ah!" said Ellinor, recovering herself, and a deep paleness succeeding to the warm and delighted flush that had been conjured to her cheek, "do not revive the past; I have sought for years — long, solitary, desolate years — to escape from its dark recollections!"

"You speak wisely, dearest Ellinor; let us assist each other in doing so. We are alone in the world, — let us unite our lots. Never, through all I have seen and felt, — in the starry nightwatch of camps; in the blaze of courts; by the sunny groves of Italy; in the deep forests of the Hartz, — never

have I forgotten you, my sweet and dear cousin. Your image has linked itself indissolubly with all I conceived of home and happiness and a tranquil and peaceful future; and now I return, and see you, and find you changed,—but oh, how lovely! Ah, let us not part again! A consoler, a guide, a soother, father, brother, husband,—all this my heart whispers I could be to you!"

Ellinor turned away her face, but her heart was very full. The solitary years that had passed over her since they last met rose up before her. The only living image that had mingled through those years with the dreams of the departed was his who now knelt at her feet,—her sole friend, her sole relative, her first—her last love! Of all the world, he was the only one with whom she could recur to the past, on whom she might repose her bruised but still unconquered affections. And Walter knew by that blush, that sigh, that tear that he was remembered, that he was beloved, that his cousin was his own at last!

"But before you end," said my friend to whom I showed the above pages, originally concluding my tale with the last sentence, "you must—it is a comfortable and orthodox old fashion—tell us about the fate of the other persons to whom you have introduced us,—the wretch Houseman."

"True, in the mysterious course of mortal affairs the greater villain had escaped, the more generous fallen. But though Houseman died without violence,—died in his bed, as honest men die,—we can scarcely believe that his life was not punishment enough. He lived in strict seclusion,—the seclusion of poverty,—and maintained himself by dressing flax. His life was several times attempted by the mob, for he was an object of universal execration and horror; and even ten years afterwards, when he died, his body was buried in secret at the dead of night, for the hatred of the world survived him."

"And the corporal, did he marry in his old age?"

"History telleth of *one* Jacob Bunting whose wife, several years younger than himself, played him certain sorry pranks with a rakish squire in the neighborhood; the said Jacob

knowing nothing thereof, but furnishing great oblectation unto his neighbors by boasting that he turned an excellent penny by selling poultry to his honor above market prices,— "for Bessy, my girl, I 'm a man of the world, augh!"

"Contented! a suitable fate for the old dog. But Peter Dealtry?"

"Of Peter Dealtry know we nothing more, save that we have seen at Grassdale church-yard a small tombstone inscribed to his memory, with the following sacred posy thereto appended:—

> "'We flourish, saith the holy text,
> One hour, and are cut down the next;
> I was like grass but yesterday,
> But death has mowed me into hay.'"[1]

"And his namesake, Sir Peter Grindlescrew Hales?"

"Went through a long life honored and respected, but met with domestic misfortunes in old age. His eldest son married a servant-maid, and his youngest daughter—"

"Eloped with the groom?"

"By no means,—with a young spendthrift, the very picture of what Sir Peter was in his youth. They were both struck out of their father's will; and Sir Peter died in the arms of his eight remaining children, seven of whom never forgave his memory for not being the eighth,—namely, chief heir."

"And his contemporary, John Courtland, the non-hypochondriac?"

"Died of sudden suffocation as he was crossing Hounslow Heath."

"But Lord ——?"

"Lived to a great age. His last days, owing to growing infirmities, were spent out of the world; every one pitied him,—it was the happiest time of his life."

"Dame Darkmans?"

"Was found dead in her bed,—from over-fatigue, it was supposed, in making merry at the funeral of a young girl on the previous day."

[1] Verbatim.

"Well! — hem — and so Walter and his cousin were really married. And did they never return to the old manor-house?"

"No; the memory that is allied only to melancholy grows sweet with years, and hallows the spot which it haunts, — not so the memory allied to dread, terror, and something too of shame. Walter sold the property, with some pangs of natural regret; after his marriage with Ellinor he returned abroad for some time, but finally settling in England, engaged in active life, and left to his posterity a name they still honor, and to his country the memory of some services that will not lightly pass away.

"But one dread and gloomy remembrance never forsook his mind, and exercised the most powerful influence over the actions and motives of his life. In every emergency, in every temptation, there rose to his eyes the fate of him so gifted, so noble in much, so formed for greatness in all things, blasted by one crime, — a crime, the offspring of bewildered reasonings, — all the while speculating upon virtue. And that fate, revealing the darker secrets of our kind, in which the true science of morals is chiefly found, taught him the two-fold lesson, — caution for himself, and charity for others. He knew henceforth that even the criminal is not all evil; the angel within us is not easily expelled, — it survives sin, ay, and many sins, and leaves us sometimes in amaze and marvel at the good that lingers round the heart even of the hardiest offender.

"And Ellinor clung with more than revived affection to one with whose lot she was now allied. Walter was her last tie upon earth, and in him she learned, day by day, more lavishly to treasure up her heart. Adversity and trial had ennobled the character of both; and she who had so long seen in her cousin all she could love, beheld now in her husband all that she could venerate and admire. A certain religious fervor, in which, after the calamities of her family, she had indulged, continued with her to the last; but (softened by human ties and the reciprocation of earthly duties and affections) it was fortunately preserved either from the undue

enthusiasm or the undue austerity into which it would otherwise, in all likelihood, have merged. What remained, however, uniting her most cheerful thoughts with something serious, and the happiest moments of the present with the dim and solemn forecast of the future, elevated her nature, not depressed, and made itself visible rather in tender than in sombre hues. And it was sweet, when the thought of Madeline and her father came across her, to recur at once for consolation to that heaven in which she believed their tears were dried, and their past sorrows but a forgotten dream. There is, indeed, a time of life when these reflections make our chief, though a melancholy, pleasure. As we grow older, and sometimes a hope, sometimes a friend, vanishes from our path, the thought of an immortality *will* press itself forcibly upon us; and there, by little and little, as the ant piles grain after grain, the garners of a future sustenance, we learn to carry our hopes and harvest, as it were, our wishes.

"Our cousins, then, were happy. Happy,—for they loved one another entirely; and on those who do so love, I sometimes think that, barring physical pain and extreme poverty, the ills of life fall with but idle malice. Yes, they were happy, in spite of the past and in defiance of the future."

"I am satisfied, then," said my friend, "and your tale is fairly done!"

And now, reader, farewell! If sometimes, as thou hast gone with me to this our parting spot, thou hast suffered thy companion to win the mastery over thine interest, to flash now on thy convictions, to touch now thy heart, to guide thy hope, to excite thy terror, to gain, it may be, to the sources of thy tears,—then is there a tie between thee and me which cannot readily be broken! And when thou hearest the malice that wrongs, affect the candor which should judge, shall he not find in thy sympathies the defence, or in thy charity the indulgence, of a friend?

ADVERTISEMENT.

In the Preface to this Novel it was stated that the original intention of its Author was to compose, upon the facts of Aram's gloomy history, a tragedy instead of a romance. It may now be not altogether without interest for the reader if I submit to his indulgence the rough outline of the earlier scenes in the fragment of a drama, which, in all probability, will never be finished. So far as I have gone, the construction of the tragedy differs, in some respects, materially from that of the tale, although the whole of what is now presented to the reader must be considered merely as a copy from the first hasty sketch of an uncompleted design.

November, 1833.

EUGENE ARAM,

A TRAGEDY.

ACT I.

SCENE I. *Aram's Apartment. — Books, Maps, and Scientific Instruments scattered around. In everything else the appearance of the greatest poverty.*

FIRST CREDITOR [*behind the scenes*]. — I must be paid.
Three moons have flitted since
You pledged your word to me.
SECOND CREDITOR. And me!
THIRD CREDITOR. And me!
ARAM [*entering*]. — Away, I tell ye! Will ye rend my garb?
Away! to-morrow. — *Gentle* sirs, to-morrow.
FIRST CREDITOR. This is your constant word.
SECOND CREDITOR. We 'll wait no more.
ARAM. Ye 'll wait no more? Enough! be seated, sirs.
Pray ye, be seated. Well! with searching eyes
Ye do survey these walls! Contain they aught —
Nay, take your leisure — to annul your claims?
[*Turning to First Creditor*]. See, sir, yon books — they 're
yours, if you but tear
That fragment of spoiled paper — be not backward,
I give them with good will. This one is Greek;
A golden work — sweet sir — a golden work;
It teaches us to bear — what I have borne! —
And to forbear men's ills, as you have done.

FIRST CREDITOR. You mock me. Well —

ARAM. Mock! mock! Al s!
my friend,
Do rags indulge in jesting? Fie, sir, fie!
[*Turning to Second Creditor*]. You will not wrong me so?
On your receipt
Take this round orb; it miniatures the world, —
And in its study I forgot the world!
Take this yon table; — a poor scholar's fare
Needs no such proud support; — yon bed, too! (Sleep
Is Night's sweet angel, leading fallen Man
Thro' yielding airs to Youth's lost paradise;
But Sleep and I have quarrell'd); — take it, sir!

SECOND CREDITOR [*muttering to the others*]. Come, we must leave him to the law, or famine.
You see his goods were costly at a groat!

FIRST CREDITOR. Well, henceforth I will grow more wise!
'T is said
Learning is better than a house or lands.
Let me be modest! Learning shall go free;
Give me security in house and lands.

THIRD CREDITOR [*lingering after the other two depart, offers a piece of money to Aram*]. There, man; I came to menace you with law
And jails. You 're poorer than I thought you! — there —

ARAM [*looking at the money*]. What! and a beggar, too!
'T is mighty well.
Good sir, I 'm grateful — I will *not* refuse you;
'T will win back Plato from the crabbed hands
Of him who lends on all things. Thank you, sir;
Plato and I will thank you.

THIRD CREDITOR. Crazed, poor scholar!
I 'll take my little one from school this day!

SCENE II.

ARAM. Rogues thrive in ease; and fools grow rich with toil;
Wealth's wanton eye on Wisdom coldly dwells,
And turns to dote upon the green youth, Folly —

O life, vile life, with what soul-lavish love
We cling to thee — when all thy charms are fled —
Yea, the more foul thy withering aspect grows
The steadier burns our passion to possess thee.
To die; ay, there 's the cure — the plashing stream
That girds these walls — the drug of the dank weeds
That rot the air below; these hoard the balm
For broken, pining, and indignant hearts.
But the witch Hope forbids me to be wise;
And, when I turn to these, Woe's only friends [*pointing to his books*]
And with their weird and eloquent voices, soothe
The lulled Babel of the world within,
I can but dream that my vexed years at last
Shall find the quiet of a hermit's cell,
And far from men's rude malice or low scorn,
Beneath the loved gaze of the lambent stars;
And with the hollow rocks, and sparry caves,
And mystic waves, and music-murmuring winds —
My oracles and co-mates — watch my life
Glide down the stream of knowledge, and behold
Its waters with a musing stillness glass
The smiles of Nature and the eyes of Heaven!

SCENE III. *Enter* BOTELER, *slowly watching him; as he remains silent and in thought,* BOTELER *touches him on the shoulder.*

BOTELER. How now! what! gloomy? and the day so bright!
Why, the old dog that guards the court below
Hath crept from out his wooden den, and shakes
His gray hide in the fresh and merry air;
Tuning his sullen and suspicious bark
Into a whine of welcome as I pass'd.
Come, rouse thee, Aram; let us forth.
ARAM. Nay, friend,
My spirit lackeys not the moody skies,
Nor changes — bright or darkling — with their change.

Farewell, good neighbor; I must work this day;—
Behold my tools — and scholars toil alone!

BOTELER. Tush! a few minutes wasted upon me
May well be spared from this long summer day.
Hast heard the news? Monson? — thou know'st the man?

ARAM. I do remember. *He was poor.* I knew him.

BOTELER. But he is poor no more. The all-changing wheel
Roll'd round, and scatter'd riches on his hearth.
A distant kinsman, while he lived a niggard,
Generous in death hath left his grateful heir
In our good neighbor. Why, you seem not glad;
Does it not please you?

ARAM. Yes.

BOTELER. And so it should;
'T is a poor fool, but honest. Had Dame Fate
Done this for you — for me; — 't is true our brains
Had taught us better how to spend the dross;
But earth hath worse men than our neighbor.

ARAM. Ay,
"Worse men"! it may be so!

BOTELER. Would I were rich!
What loyal service, what complacent friendship,
What gracious love upon the lips of Beauty,
Bloom into life beneath the beams of gold.
Venus and Bacchus, the bright Care-dispellers,
Are never seen but in the train of Fortune.
Would I were rich!

ARAM. Shame on thy low ambition!
Would *I* were rich, too, — but for other aims.
Oh! what a glorious and time-hallow'd world
Would I invoke around me: and wall in
A haunted solitude with those bright souls,
That, with a still and warning aspect, gaze
Upon us from the hallowing shroud of books!
By Heaven, there should not be a seer who left
The world one doctrine, but I 'd task his lore,
And commune with his spirit! All the truths
Of all the tongues of earth — I 'd have them *all*,

Had I the golden spell to raise their ghosts!
I 'd build me domes, too; from whose giddy height
My soul would watch the night stars, and unsphere
The destinies of man, or track the ways
Of God from world to world; pursue the winds,
The clouds that womb the thunder — to their home;
Invoke and conquer Nature — share her throne
On earth, and ocean, and the chainless air;
And on the Titan fabrics of old truths
Raise the bold spirit to a height with heaven!
Would — would my life might boast one year of wealth
Though death should bound it!

BOTELER. Thou mayst have thy wish!

ARAM [*rapt, and abstractedly*]. Who spoke? Methought I heard my genius say —
My evil genius — "Thou mayst have thy wish!"

BOTELER. Thou heard'st aright! Monson this eve will pass
By Nid's swift wave; he bears his gold with him;
The spot is lone — untenanted — remote;
And, if thou hast but courage, — one bold deed,
And one short moment — thou art poor no more!

ARAM [*after a pause, turning his eyes slowly on Boteler*].
Boteler, was that thy voice?

BOTELER. How couldst thou doubt it?

ARAM. Methought its tone seem'd changed; and now methinks,
Now, that I look upon thy face, my eyes
Discover not its old familiar aspect.
Thou 'rt very sure thy name is Boteler?

BOTELER. Pshaw,
Thou 'rt dreaming still: — awake, and let thy mind
And heart drink all I breathe into thy ear.
I know thee, Aram, for a man humane,
Gentle, and musing; but withal of stuff
That might have made a warrior; and desires,
Though of a subtler nature than my own,
As high, and hard to limit. Care and want
Have made thee what they made thy friend long since.

And when I wound my heart to a resolve,
Dangerous, but fraught with profit, I did fix
On thee as one whom Fate and Nature made
A worthy partner in the nameless deed.

ARAM. Go on. I pray thee pause not.

BOTELER. There remain
Few words to body forth my full design.
Know that — at my advice — this eve the gull'd
And credulous fool of Fortune quits his home.
Say but one word, and thou shalt share with me
The gold he bears about him.

ARAM. At what price?

BOTELER. A little courage.

ARAM. And my soul! — No more.
I see your project —

BOTELER. And embrace it?

ARAM. Lo!
How many deathful, dread, and ghastly snares
Encompass him whom the stark hunger gnaws,
And the grim demon Penury shuts from out
The golden Eden of his bright desires!
To-day, I thought to slay myself, and die,
No single hope once won! — and now I hear
Dark words of blood, and quail not, nor recoil. —
'T is but a death in either case; — or mine
Or that poor dotard's! — and the guilt — the guilt, —
Why, *what* is guilt? — A word! We are the tools,
From birth to death, of destiny; and shaped,
For sin or virtue, by the iron force
Of the unseen, but unresisted hands
Of Fate, the august compeller of the world.

BOTELER [*aside*]. — It works. Behold the devil at all hearts!
I am a soldier, and inured to blood;
But *he* hath lived with moralists forsooth.
And yet one word to tempt him, and one sting
Of the food-craving clay, and the meek sage
Grasps at the crime he shuddered at before.

ARAM [*abruptly*]. Thou hast broke thy fast this morning?

BOTELER. Ay, in truth.

ARAM. But *I* have not since yestermorn, and ask'd
In the belief that certain thoughts unwont
To blacken the still mirror of my mind
Might be the phantoms of the sickening flesh
And the faint nature. I was wrong; since you
Share the same thoughts, nor suffer the same ills.

BOTELER. Indeed, I knew not this. Come to my roof:
'T is poor, but not so bare as to deny
A soldier's viands to a scholar's wants.
Come, and we 'll talk this over. I perceive
That your bold heart already is prepared,
And the details alone remain. — Come, friend,
Lean upon me, for you seem weak; the air
Will breathe this languor into health.

ARAM. Your hearth
Is widow'd, — we shall be alone?

BOTELER. Alone.

ARAM. Come, then; — the private way. We 'll shun the crowd.
I do not love the insolent eyes of men.

. . . . . .

SCENE IV. *Night — a wild and gloomy Forest — the River at a distance.*

Enter ARAM *slowly.*

ARAM. Were it but done, methinks 't would scarce bequeath
Much food for that dull hypocrite, Remorse.
'T is a fool less on earth! — a clod — a grain
From the o'er-rich creation; — be it so.
But I, in one brief year, could give to men
More solid, glorious, undecaying good
Than his whole life could purchase: — yet without
The pitiful and niggard dross *he* wastes,
And *I* for lacking starve, my power is nought,

And the whole good undone! Where, then, the crime,
Though by dread means, to compass that bright end?
And yet — and yet — I falter, and my flesh
Creeps, and the horror of a ghastly thought
Makes stiff my hair, — my blood is cold, — my knees
Do smite each other, — and throughout my frame
Stern manhood melts away. Blow forth, sweet air
Brace the mute nerves, — release the gathering ice
That curdles up my veins, — call forth the soul,
That, with a steady and unfailing front,
Hath look'd on want, and woe, and early death —
And walk'd with thee, sweet air, upon thy course
Away from earth through the rejoicing heaven!
Who moves there? — Speak! — who art thou?

Scene V.

Enter Boteler.

Boteler. Murdoch Boteler!
Hast thou forestall'd me? Come, this bodeth well:
It proves thy courage, Aram.
Aram. Rather say
The restless fever that does spur us on
From a dark thought unto a darker deed.
Boteler. He should have come ere this.
Aram. I pray thee, Boteler,
Is it not told of some great painter — whom
Rome bore, and earth yet worships — that he slew
A man — a brother man — and without ire,
But with cool heart and hand, that he might fix
His gaze upon the wretch's dying pangs;
And by them learn what mortal throes to paint
On the wrung features of a suffering god?
Boteler. Ay: I have heard the tale.
Aram. And *he* is honor'd.
Men vaunt his glory, but forget his guilt.

They see the triumph; nor, with wolfish tongues,
Feed on the deed from which the triumph grew.
Is it not so?

BOTELER. Thou triflest: this no hour
For the light legends of a gossip's lore —

ARAM. Peace, man! I did but question of the fact.
Enough. — I marvel why our victim lingers.

BOTELER. Hush! dost thou hear no footsteps? — Ha, he comes,
I see him by yon pine-tree. Look, he smiles;
Smiles as he walks, and sings —

ARAM. Alas! poor fool!
So sport we all, while over us the pall
Hangs, and Fate's viewless hands prepare our shroud.

SCENE VI.

Enter MONSON.

MONSON. Ye have not waited, sirs?

BOTELER. Nay, name it not.

MONSON. The nights are long and bright: an hour the less
Makes little discount from the time.

ARAM. *An hour!*
What deeds an hour may witness!

MONSON. It is true.
[*To Boteler*]. — Doth he upbraid? — he has a gloomy brow:
I like him not.

BOTELER. The husk hides goodly fruit.
'T is a deep scholar, Monson; and the gloom
Is not of malice, but of learned thought.

MONSON. Say'st thou? — I love a scholar. Let us on:
We will not travel far to-night?

ARAM. *Not far!*

BOTELER. Why, as our limbs avail; — thou hast the gold?

MONSON. Ay, and my wife suspects not. [*Laughing.*

BOTELER. Come, that 's well.
I 'm an old soldier, Monson, and I love
This baffling of the Church's cankering ties.
We 'll find thee other wives, my friend! — Who holds
The golden lure shall have no lack of loves.

MONSON. Ha! ha! — both wise and merry. — [*To Aram.*] — Come, sir, on.

ARAM. I follow.
[*Aside*]. — Can men sin thus in a dream?

. . . . . .

SCENE VII. *Scene changes to a different part of the Forest — a Cave, overhung with firs and other trees — the Moon is at her full, but clouds are rolling swiftly over her disc —* ARAM *rushes from the Cavern.*

ARAM. 'T is done! — 't is done! — 't is done! — A life is gone
Out of a crowded world! *I* struck no more!
O God! — I did not slay him! 't was not *I!*

[*Enter* BOTELER *more slowly from the Cave, and looking round.*]

BOTELER. Why didst thou leave me ere our task was o'er?

ARAM. Was he not dead then? — Did he breathe again?
Or cry, "Help, help"? — *I* did not strike the blow!

BOTELER. Dead! — and no witness, save the blinded bat!
But the gold, Aram! thou didst leave the gold?

ARAM. The gold! I had forgot. *Thou* hast the gold.
Come, let us share, and part —

BOTELER. Not here; the spot
Is open, and the rolling moon may light
Some wanderer's footsteps hither. To the deeps
Which the stars pierce not — of the inmost wood —
We will withdraw and share — and weave our plans,
So that the world may know not of this deed.

ARAM. Thou sayest well! I did not strike the blow!
How red the moon looks! let us hide from her!

ACT II.

[*Time, Ten Years after the date of the first Act.*]

SCENE I. *Peasants dancing — a beautiful Wood Scene — a Cottage in the front.*

MADELINE — LAMBOURN — MICHAEL.

[LAMBOURN *comes forward.*]

COME, my sweet Madeline, though our fate denies
The pomp by which the great and wealthy mark
The white days of their lot, at least thy sire
Can light with joyous faces and glad hearts
The annual morn which brought so fair a boon,
And blest his rude hearth with a child like thee.

MADELINE. My father, my dear father, since that morn
The sun hath call'd from out the depth of time
The shapes of twenty summers; and no hour
That did not own to Heaven thy love — thy care!

LAMBOURN. Thou hast repaid me; and mine eyes o'erflow
With tears that tell thy virtues, my sweet child;
For ever from thy cradle thou wert fill'd
With meek and gentle thought; thy step was soft
And thy voice tender; and within thine eyes,
And on thy cloudless brow, lay deeply glass'd
The quiet and the beauty of thy soul.
As thou didst grow in years, the love and power
Of Nature wax'd upon thee; — thou wouldst pore
On the sweet stillness of the summer hills,
Or the hush'd face of waters, as a book
Where God had written beauty; and in turn
Books grew to thee, as Nature's page had grown,
And study and lone musing nursed thy youth.
Yet wert thou ever woman in thy mood,
And soft, though serious; nor in abstract thought

Lost household zeal, or the meek cares of love.
Bless thee, my child. Thou look'st around for one
To chase the *paler* rose from that pure cheek,
And the vague sadness from those loving eyes.
Nay, turn not, Madeline, for I know, in truth,
No man to whom I would so freely give
Thy hand as his — no man so full of wisdom,
And yet so gentle in his bearing of it;
No man so kindly in his thoughts of others,
So rigid of all virtues in himself,
As this same learned wonder, Eugene Aram.

MADELINE. In sooth his name sounds lovelier for thy praise;
Would he were by to hear it! for methinks
His nature given too much to saddening thought,
And words like thine would cheer it. Oft he starts
And mutters to himself, and folds his arms,
And traces with keen eyes the empty air;
Then shakes his head, and smiles — no happy smile!

LAMBOURN. It is the way with students, for they live
In an ideal world, and people this
With shadows thrown from fairy forms afar.
Fear not! — thy love, like some fair morn of May,
Shall chase the dreams in clothing earth with beauty.
But the noon wanes, and yet he does not come.
Neighbors, has one amongst you seen this day
The scholar, Aram?

MICHAEL. By the hoary oak
That overhangs the brook, I mark'd this morn
A bending figure, motionless and lonely.
I near'd it, but it heard — it saw me — not;
It spoke — I listen'd — and it said, "Ye leaves
That from the old and changeful branches fall
Upon the waters, and are borne away
Whither none know, ye are men's worthless lives;
Nor boots it whether ye drop off by time,
Or the rude anger of some violent wind
Scatter ye ere your hour. Amidst the mass
Of your green life, who misses one lost leaf?"

He said no more; then I did come beside
The speaker: it was Aram.

MADELINE [*aside*]. Moody ever!
And yet he says he loves me and is happy!

MICHAEL. But he seem'd gall'd and sore at my approach;
And when I told him I was hither bound,
And ask'd if aught I should convey from him,
He frown'd, and coldly turning on his heel,
Answer'd — that "he should meet me." I was pain'd
To think that I had vex'd so good a man.

FIRST NEIGHBOR. Ay, he is good as wise. All men love Aram.

SECOND NEIGHBOR. And with what justice! My old dame's complaint
Had baffled all the leeches; but his art,
From a few simple herbs, distill'd a spirit
Has made her young again.

THIRD NEIGHBOR. By his advice,
And foresight of the seasons, I did till
My land, and now my granaries scarce can hold
Their golden wealth; while those who mock'd his words
Can scarcely from hard earth and treacherous air
Win aught to keep the wolf from off their door.

MICHAEL. And while he stoops to what poor men should know
They say that in the deep and secret lore
That scholars mostly prize he hath no peer.
Old men, who pale and care-begone have lived
A life amidst their books, will, at his name,
Lift up their hands, and cry, "The wondrous man!"

LAMBOURN. His birth-place must thank Fortune for the fame
That he one day will win it.

MICHAEL. Dost thou know
Whence Aram came, ere to these hamlet scenes
Ten summers since he wander'd?

LAMBOURN. Michael, no!
'T was from some distant nook of our fair isle.
But he so sadly flies from what hath chanced

In his more youthful life, and there would seem
So much of winter in those April days,
That I have shunn'd vain question of the past.
Thus much I learn: he hath no kin alive;
No parent to exult in such a son.

MICHAEL. Poor soul! You spake of sadness. Know you why
So good a man is sorrowful?

LAMBOURN. Methinks
He hath been tried — not lightly — by the sharp
And everlasting curse to learning doom'd,
That which poor labor bears without a sigh,
But whose mere breath can wither genius — Want!
Want — the harsh, hoary beldame — the obscene
Witch that hath power o'er brave men's thews and nerves,
And lifts the mind from out itself.

MICHAEL. Why think you
That he hath been thus cross'd? His means appear
Enough, at least for his subdued desires.

LAMBOURN. I'll tell thee wherefore. Do but speak of want,
And lo! he winces, and his nether lip
Quivers impatient, and he sighs, and frowns,
And mutters — "Hunger is a fearful thing;
And it is terrible that man's high soul
Should be made barren in its purest aims
By the mere lack of the earth's yellow clay."
Then will he pause — and pause — and come at last
And put some petty moneys in my hand,
And cry, "Go, feed the wretch; he must not starve,
Or he will sin. Men's throats are scarcely safe,
While Hunger prowls beside them!"

MICHAEL. The kind man!
But this comes only from a *gentle* heart,
Not from a *tried* one.

LAMBOURN. Nay, not only so;
For I have heard him, as he turn'd away,
Mutter, in stifled tones, "No man can tell
What Want is in his brother man, unless
Want's self hath taught him, — as the fiend taught me!"

MICHAEL. And hath he ne'er enlarged upon these words,
Nor lit them into clearer knowledge by
A more pronounced detail?
LAMBOURN. No; nor have I
Much sought to question. In my younger days
I pass'd much time amid the scholar race,
The learned lamps which light the unpitying world
By their own self-consuming. They are proud —
A proud and jealous tribe — and proud men loathe
To speak of former sufferings: most of all
Want's suffering, in the which the bitterest sting
Is in the humiliation; therefore I
Cover the past with silence. But whate'er
His origin or early fate, there lives
None whom I hold more dearly, or to whom
My hopes so well could trust my Madeline's lot.

SCENE II. *The crowd at the back of the Stage gives way — ARAM slowly enters — The Neighbors greet him with respect, several appear to thank him for various benefits or charities — He returns the greeting in dumb show, with great appearance of modesty.*

ARAM. Nay, nay, good neighbors, ye do make me blush
To think that to so large a store of praise
There goes so poor desert. — My Madeline! — Sweet,
I see thee, and all brightens!
LAMBOURN. You are late —
But not less welcome. On my daughter's birthday
You scarce should be the last to wish her joy.
ARAM. Joy — joy! — Is life so poor and harsh a boon
That we should hail each year that wears its gloss
And glory into winter? Shall we crown
With roses Time's bald temples, and rejoice —
For what? — that we are hastening to the grave?
No, no! — I cannot look on thy young brow,
Beautiful Madeline! nor, upon the day
Which makes thee one year nearer unto Heaven,

Feel sad for Earth, whose very soul thou art; —
Or art, at least, to me! — for wert thou not,
Earth would be dead and wither'd as the clay
Of her own offspring when the breath departs.

LAMBOURN. I scarce had thought a scholar's dusty tomes
Could teach his lips the golden ways to woo.
Howbeit, in all times, man never learns
To love, nor learns to flatter.
Well, my friends,
Will ye within? — our simple fare invites.
Aram, when thou hast made thy peace with Madeline,
We shall be glad to welcome thee. — [*To Michael*]. This love
Is a most rigid faster, and would come
To a quick ending in an epicure.

[*Exeunt* LAMBOURN, *the Neighbors, etc.*

SCENE III.

MADELINE *and* ARAM.

ARAM. Alone with thee! — Peace comes to earth again.
Beloved! would our life could, like a brook
Watering a desert, glide unseen away,
Murmuring our own heart's music, — which is love,
And glassing only heaven, — which is love's life!
I am not made to live among mankind;
They stir dark memory from unwilling sleep,
And — But no matter. Madeline, it is strange
That one like thee, for whom, methinks, fair Love
Should wear its bravest and most gallant garb,
Should e'er have cast her heart's rich freight upon
A thing like me, — not fashion'd in the mould
Which wins a maiden's eye, — austere of life,
And grave and sad of bearing, — and so long
Inured to solitude, as to have grown
A man that hath the shape, but not the soul,
Of the world's inmates.

MADELINE. 'T is for that I loved.
The world I love not — therefore I love *thee!*
Come, shall I tell thee, — 't is an oft-told tale,
Yet never wearies, — by what bright degrees
Thy empire rose, till it o'erspread my soul,
And made my all of being love? Thou know'st
When first thou camest into these lone retreats,
My years yet dwelt in childhood; but my thoughts
Went deeper than my playmates'. Books I loved,
But not the books that woo a woman's heart; —
I loved not tales of war and stern emprise,
And man let loose on man — dark deeds, of which
The name was glory, but the nature crime, —
Nor themes of vulgar love — of maidens' hearts
Won by small worth, set off by gaudy show; —
Those tales which win the wilder hearts, in me
Did move some anger and a world of scorn.
All that I dream'd of sympathy was given
Unto the lords of Mind — the victor chiefs
Of Wisdom — or of Wisdom's music — Song;
And as I read of them, I dream'd and drew
In my soul's colors, shapes my soul might love,
And, loving, worship, — they were like to thee!
Thou camest unknown and lonely, — and around
Thy coming, and thy bearing, and thy mood
Hung mystery, — and in guessing at its clew,
Mystery grew interest, and the interest love!

ARAM [*aside*]. O woman! how from that which she should shun,
Does the poor trifler draw what charms her most!

MADELINE. Then, as Time won thee frequent to our hearth,
Thou from thy learning's height didst stoop to teach me
Nature's more gentle secrets, — the sweet lore
Of the green herb and the bee-worshipp'd flower;
And when the night did o'er this nether earth
Distil meek quiet, and the heart of heaven
With love grew breathless, thou wert wont to raise
My wild thoughts to the weird and solemn stars;

Tell of each orb the courses and the name;
And of the winds, the clouds, th' invisible air,
Make eloquent discourse; — until methought
No human life, but some diviner spirit
Alone could preach such truths of things divine.
And so — and so —

ARAM. From heaven we turn'd to earth,
And Thought did father Passion? — Gentlest love!
If thou couldst know how hard it is for one
Who takes such feeble pleasure in this earth
To worship aught earth-born, thou'dst learn how wild
The wonder of my passion and thy power.
But ere three days are past thou wilt be mine!
And mine forever! Oh, delicious thought!
How glorious were the future, could I shut
The past — the past — from — Ha! what stirr'd? didst hear,
Madeline, — didst hear?

MADELINE. Hear what? — the very air
Lies quiet as an infant in its sleep.

ARAM [*looking round*]. Methought I heard —

MADELINE. What, love?

ARAM. It was a cheat
Of these poor fools, the senses. Come, thy hand;
I love to feel thy touch, thou art so pure —
So soft — so sacred in thy loveliness,
That I feel safe with thee! Great God himself
Would shun to launch upon the brow of guilt
His bolt while thou wert by!

MADELINE. Alas, alas!
Why dost thou talk of guilt?

ARAM. Did I, sweet love,
Did I say guilt? — it is an ugly word.
Why, sweet, indeed — did I say guilt, my Madeline?

MADELINE. In truth you did. Your hand is dry — the pulse
Beats quick and fever'd: you consume too much
Of life in thought — you over-rack the nerves —
And thus a shadow bids them quell and tremble;
But when I queen it, Eugene, o'er your home,

I 'll see this fault amended.
ARAM. Ay, thou shalt. —
In sooth thou shalt.

SCENE IV.

Enter MICHAEL.

MICHAEL. Friend Lambourn sends his greeting,
And prays you to his simple banquet.
MADELINE. Come!
His raciest wine will in my father's cup
Seem dim till you can pledge him. Eugene, come!
ARAM. And if I linger o'er the draught, sweet love,
Thou 'lt know I do but linger o'er the wish
For thee, which sheds its blessing on the bowl.

. . . . . .

SCENE. *Sunset — a Wood-scene — a Cottage at a distance — in the foreground a Woodman felling wood.*

Enter ARAM.

Wise men have praised the peasant's thoughtless lot,
And learned pride hath envied humble toil:
If they were right, why, let us burn our books,
And sit us down, and play the fool with Time,
Mocking the prophet Wisdom's grave decrees,
And walling this trite PRESENT with dark clouds,
Till night becomes our nature, and the ray
Ev'n of the stars but meteors that withdraw
The wandering spirit from the sluggish rest
Which makes its proper bliss. I will accost
This denizen of toil, who, with hard hands,
Prolongs from day to day unthinking life,
And ask if *he* be happy. — Friend, good eve.
WOODMAN. 'T is the great scholar! — Worthy sir, good eve.

ARAM. Thou seem'st o'erworn: through this long summer day
Hast thou been laboring in the lonely glen?
WOODMAN. Ay, save one hour at noon. 'T is weary work;
But men like me, good sir, must not repine
At work which feeds the craving mouths at home.
ARAM. Then thou art happy, friend, and with content
Thy life hath made a compact. Is it so?
WOODMAN. Why, as to that, sir, I must surely feel
Some pangs when I behold the ease with which
The wealthy live; while I, through heat and cold,
Can scarcely conquer Famine.

. . . . . .

THE END.

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